

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP: A MODEL FOR
HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT
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This project was designed to address the need of a socialization process for children at the Faith Missionary Baptist Church in Elkhart, Indiana. Twenty-six sessions of preaching and classroom instructions enabled the children to develop the foundation of spiritual competency and practical skill level development to be utilized in society. The results of the model were implemented with a qualitative analysis method. Our results showed the children’s scriptural competency grew and the life skills received provided the confidence necessary for the transition into mainstream society.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To The Most High God, we give Praise, Glory and Honor for the privilege to study and grow in the Academy. During my pursuit of this goal, I encountered many adverse circumstances, but the Lord Jesus Christ kept me triumphant. Holy writ reminds us that “many are the afflictions of the righteous,” but God would deliver us out of them all. With great affection, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to all the persons who contributed to this milestone achievement.

First, to my wife Judith, thank you for assisting, motivating, and compelling me to complete this work. You have supported a lifetime dream that is now a living reality. Your love has transformed my life. I am especially thankful to God's living organism, the Church. Particularly, the Faith Missionary Baptist Church where I serve as Founder and Pastor. I give special thanks to The West Hunter Street Baptist Church for opening their hearts to help me accomplish this goal. Thanks and much gratitude also to my editor, an architect of the English language, Ted Baxendale.

Finally, to my Professional Associates—Doctor's Linda Thompsom, Ed Wimberly, and Asa Hilliard—thanks for your insights and standards of excellence. Most importantly, thank you to my mentors Dr. Robert Linthicum, Dr. Paul Hertig, and Dean Dr. Clinton McNair for making this project a lifetime achievement. Your expertise has made you an invaluable part of my life forever.

DEDICATION

This project for the Doctor of Ministry degree is dedicated to the man who is the impetus for my intellectual pursuits, my father, Grady Wicker, son of Ned Hines and Clara Wicker Ward.

Additionally, this project is dedicated to my mother, who shared with me that the hand of God was upon my life. She frequently reminded me of the necessity to get to know my God. Her name is Bessie Mae Wicker, the daughter of Anthony and Rosetta Lewis.

Moreover, this project is dedicated to Clarita Kristine, Grady III, and Isaiah for the purpose of setting before them the highest example in personal and professional development. I love you very much because you are Wickers and the blessed children of God.

INTRODUCTION

*Whoever seeks me shall find me in children,
for there will I be made manifest.*

—Lord's saying in Hippolytus ¹

The purpose of this project developed out of a personal and practical desire to utilize the church to meet spiritual and practical needs. In my view, society's socialization process has broken down. I believe that with disciples of Jesus Christ and a group of trained professionals in the work world, we can re-establish a socialization system for our children that would enable them transition into mainstream society again. For example, if I have an engineer, plumber, lawyer or teacher who are disciples of Jesus Christ; I can teach them how to develop children who will become disciples and grow up to be our next generation of professionals. I believe that the church can be the catalyst for cutting-edge change in the twenty-first century to facilitate a thriving future for America's children.

Historically, before the emergence of the digital, electronic, and Internet "communities" emerged, children adjusted well in society. But this process today creates an entirely new generation of oppressed and depressed persons. The lines of classism are more evident now more than ever before. Because of this, the church must position herself to be the bridge for socializing our young people into society.

Dr. Asa G. Hilliard, III, Professor at Georgia State University stated,

¹ Eberhard Arnold, *Children's Education and Community: The Basis of Bruderhof Education* (Farmington, IL: Plough Press, 1976), 37-38.

Suzuki saw that to achieve success in training the bird, it took perseverance, energy, patience, repetition, preparation and time. In other words, it takes the right environment. He saw that both humans and in parakeets, inspiration and interest are acquired almost involuntarily because of Exposure. Because the nature of exposure (the quality of it) is so powerful, we should strive to expose the children, the bird or any learner to a master teacher, a master model.²

Dr. Hilliard argues the necessity for a model or process to socialize children into the mainstream. Without a model and environment, society receives nonfunctional persons who become liabilities instead of assets.

Fu-Kiau is one of the most profound and refreshing voices on child development and socialization. “He suggested that the purpose of Kindezi is to nurture the child and to nurture the environment within which the child is to be sustained. He says that Kindezi has as its purpose to enjoy taking special care of the child and the social and physical environment.”³

The environment children live in today is more aggressive and, to some extent, more hostile. The emergence of violence and material wealth creates such competition that the moral concern for community appears to be weakening. At some point, society must move in the direction of providing a systematic way to prevent our children from falling between the cracks. It is no secret that the gap between rich and poor is increasing and people are tightening their belts in order to make ends meet.

I trust that this project will in some way encourage responsible persons to take direct action to meet the needs of our children.

² Asa G. Hilliard, III, *Tapping the Genius and Touching the Spirit: A Human Approach to the Rescue of our Children* (Atlanta, GA: The Ninth Annual Benjamin E. Mays Lecture, 1997), 9.

³ Ibid.

My suggestion for a socialization process involves several factors: First, we must recruit people who see that God's presence can be seen in the face of children. Those eyes of purity and innocence are in need of discipline, training, and discipleship. Secondly, this process calls for children who desire to be the best they can be for the glory of God. We must create a desire in our children to learn more about God in order to inspire them to excellence.

Thirdly, the process calls for experts in scriptural instruction and practical life skills. These persons are dually aligned to serve God and teach children the way to success. Fourth, we must secure the proper tangible resources for the children's personal and practical development in ministry and life.

A society who trains her children properly with God and practical life skills will produce decent citizens.

CHAPTER ONE

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

When we examine the plight of our children and their future, it raises critical questions about their survival. In order to survive, one must first have a spiritual foundation. The spiritual foundation teaches children that life is full of joys and disappointments, victories and defeats, times of laughter and times of crying, moments of understanding and moments of misunderstanding. Spiritual development is now an absolute necessity.

There are a number of competing forces in the 21st century directed at children. Mary Pipher, author of *Reviving Ophelia*, makes the point: “Most middle-class parents have very little idea of what their children are facing when they grab their back packs and head for school. The social world of school is more complicated for our children than it was for us.”¹

Our children are expected to master complex, evolving technologies, to recognize early and often how race, class, and gender modify points of view. The children are fully aware they are a “target market” for advertising firms and ultimately they have no choice about whether to “think globally: global trade, global warming, and global conflicts and terrorism.”²

Moreover, God has been removed from the schoolhouse. In some states, the Ten Commandments can be located in City Hall or the State Capital, but not in the classroom.

¹ Marilyn Chandler McEntyre, “Teach Your Children Well,” *Christianity Today*, 1 October 2001, 71.

² Ibid.

This is one of the reasons that over two million children are home schooled, not to mention the many children attending Christian schools.

Marilyn Chandler McEntyre suggests,

To provide these things might mean more one-to-one mentoring, more intergenerational education; more attention to biblical and general literacy; more intellectual sophistication, as well as spiritual nourishment. This means taking the educational function of the church more seriously than many churches do and defining it more widely.³

Generally, parents appear to be only concerned with their physical appearance, the clothes they wear, the car they drive, the house they live in and its location, and whatever social club is the symbol of success and status. My concern is that our children do not have the foundational and practical tools to survive this avalanche of technology and the non-relational approach to life it brings.

This technological age appears to be moving us away from relationships and encourages electronic and digital communities. The digital age is creating a digital economic, moral and spiritual divide. How do we manage to create a “community” in the midst of an electronic, economic and technological bonanza? Is it possible that we do not have to meet physically face to face in order to build relationships as a means of being in community?

My thesis argues that we must prepare children at church for the type of world they are forced to live in. We cannot afford to wait because the technology has created great economy, but provided no socialization process for the children to move into the mainstream with the spiritual and practical fiber necessary for their survival.

Here is where the Pastor, Teacher, Visionary, and Practitioner must begin to create a vehicle that meets the spiritual and practical needs of children in a highly

advanced society. This process would enable our children to move smoothly into a changing society with a global perspective. We must help develop our children's worldview in church, as well as teach them that the God we serve can prepare them to succeed at the highest level, if they place God first.

With this in mind, the church can give children a meaningful legacy of God and community. I am fully aware that this task is enormous and highly challenging. There will be obstacles that prevent programs like this from being launched. However, this is an opportunity to move this generation in the right direction with a process to assist and support the children. The ministry model of this doctoral project affords an opportunity to contribute to the future of our children and experience the rewards of adopting a process to preserve and facilitate excellence in life and ministry.

This project hopes to achieve several objectives:

- to provide our children with a godly foundation and socialization process that equips them to enter into mainstream society;
- to create a community of hope and a better way of life for those who are less fortunate and who do not have the resources necessary to compete with those persons who have the resources to survive;
- to develop a systemic program for the youth in society to live with a plan and purpose for achieving their goals.

Significance of the Project

³ Ibid.

This project is unique in that it utilizes the church as a foundation for spiritual and practical development. Children learn immediately that God and the priorities of God are first and foremost in life. The Bible teaches that we are to put God and His Kingdom first and other “things” shall be added unto us. God first, Kingdom first, and everything else will work.

The Researcher’s Journey

As I reflect on my journey, family is where it all began for me. I am the eldest of four children, with two sisters and one brother. Daddy taught us that there was nothing more important than family. We were very happy and beautiful children. Our dress was very neat, clean, and superb. In the early years, my mother did not work outside the home and my dad worked for the Chrysler Corporation. Both of my parents were reared on the East Side of Detroit, Michigan. Grady, my dad, grew up in the North End of Detroit, right at East Eight Mile Road. My dad was the second oldest of eleven children who were reared in Black Bottom and later moved into the Brewster Douglas Projects.

As children, we would occasionally visit the Brewster Projects to visit our grandparents, who spoiled us rotten. However, things were not always so happy. In fact, these times were about to change and throw my siblings and me into a whirlwind of confusion, shock, devastation, and, ultimately, therapy.

Divorce

One day after getting up in the morning, I remember mother packing our clothes and going to our grandparents house at 2724 Beaubien. Mother was not angry or anything. She apparently was keeping cool and led us to believe we were just going for another visit to our grandparent’s home. But after a few days, I noticed something was

wrong. We were not picking up daddy anymore and had not seen him for several days. I asked mother “when are we going back home?” Mother replied, “We are not going back home, your father has beat me for the last time. I will not be subject to this crazy stuff anymore.” Immediately, I began to cry because we loved daddy. Although he was highly abusive and crazy, he was our father.

The days after this were long and tough. Mother secured a job with the Sanders Company and she would be gone most of the time working. Grandmother babysat us and we did everything we could to drive her crazy. When mother returned home, grandmother would tell her how we behaved and we would find out what an extension cord beating was all about.

It was clear our family would never be the same. We were living with grandmother, daddy was not seen, we were extremely disturbed, and our lives had changed forever.

My sister and I attended Balch Elementary School. We rode the bus, which would pick us up on the corner of Lincoln Street. During that time, we were moved to a school where we knew no one, our daddy was gone, mommy worked all the time, and grandmother would place us in the clothes closet when we were bad. When mommy came home, she would beat us because of our horrendous behavior.

The divorce was taking its toll on us at school. In one day, my two sisters and I were all in the office at one point or another. My homeroom teacher, Ms. Carlisle asked me to do something. I don’t recall what it was. Nevertheless, I refused and, at some point, she attempted to move me or force me to do what she required. The next thing I knew, I was on the floor in total rebellion, kicking and screaming, “Leave me alone, I want to go home.” Immediately, I was sent to the office, taken to the boiler room by the Principal,

and paddled. After that, a lot of weird things happened with my sisters and me, particularly with conflict in school. Mother took us to a psychologist, I discovered later, to help us with the grief of divorce and the broken family. Mother later shared that we were fighting teachers and sitting and standing in a daze while in class. Sometimes we would go into crying spells saying, "I want my daddy." The divorce and family break-up really tore us apart to the point of needing the help of a psychologist.

Troubled Children

Our rebellion began to show up in everything we did. We were angry and upset that mother took us away from daddy. Although we knew why mommy took us away, as children we could not accept this decision. We blamed mother for everything and rebelled constantly.

I remember when mother first started to date other men. Mommy was a beautiful lady and guys were always coming by to spend time with her. I hated mother for this because these men were not my daddy. I did not want them touching my mother at all. The more I saw these men, the angrier I became and, on one occasion, I attempted to run away.

My grandparents had a basement in their row house, so one day I decided to disappear. I had said before that I was going to run away if mommy didn't take me home to daddy. One night, I hid in the basement as if I was running away. My mother had another man visiting her at the time. On this night, I hid in the basement. For a while, I sat in a corner, hiding in a box with clothes on top of me. Eventually, I decided to look around to see what I could get into. I noticed the washing machine with the wringer, which had two rollers that squeezed the clothes dry. I plugged it in and immediately began to place my hand in and out while the rollers were turning, as if to wring dry some

wet clothes. After several attempts, my hand got caught. The rollers began to squeeze my hand and I immediately began screaming as loud as I could. Mother and her boyfriend rushed downstairs. The ringer popped because my arm was too big. Mommy grabbed me and carried me upstairs to call an ambulance. I was rushed to Children's Hospital to stay for one entire week with my arm in a sling in the vertical position. Because of this episode, my daddy would come to see about me that week.

My sisters were also fighting and lashing out at all authority in the schools. Finally, mother had no choice but to get us some help. After these episodes, daddy started visiting regularly at our grandparent's home and our behavior slowly got better.

Eventually, we too became part of the Project community, learning the ways and wickedness most project kids learned, such as stealing, lying, deceit, strong-arming kids, robbing, and eventually gang activity. We believed the projects were our family. As kids in the community, we shared everything from stealing to sex.

Devil's night was well known in Detroit. The night before Halloween, kids between the ages of 8–19 years old would meet on the community playground at dawn. We would then proceed through the entire community knocking over trashcans and setting trash on fire. Since downtown Detroit was about a one-mile walk, we would all then walk downtown to the nighttime department stores to determine which one we would raid. After locating the perfect one, about twenty-five of us, all at one time, would walk into the store and position ourselves in front of the merchandise of our choice. Once positioned, one of the older kids would yell, "raid, raid, raid." All together, we would grab the merchandise from the shelves and run out of the store. This, in our minds, was an exhilarating bonding experience.

On other occasions, we would shine shoes on Woodward Avenue. Woodward Avenue divided the city into the East and West Side. About ten of us made our own shoe shine boxes and worked weekends in order to earn money honestly. There were also times when we robbed Burlesque Theatres on Woodward Avenue by snatching the money bags off the counter. We were bonding in strange ways, but we were the “Brewster Boys.”

Roller skating on weekends was a great experience for some and tragedy for others. If you lived in the projects and went skating at the Arcadia Skating Rink, you were safe and had a great time. After all, the Brewster Boys ran the skating rink. However, if you were not from the projects where we grew up, you were subject to being robbed, beaten, and your clothes and skates taken.

One day about six other kids and I were “sliding,” not far from a refreshment counter inside the skating rink. Sliding simply was pushing off on your skates extremely fast and turning your skates and body to one side or the other and slide. The speed and the direction of one’s skates caused a sliding effect. While we were sliding, a floor guard who maintained order in the skating rink, saw us sliding and, out of all the kids, he picked out me and took my skates. I presume he thought I was the ring leader. Immediately, I went to my uncle and mentioned, “The floor guard took my skates because we were sliding by the refreshment counter.” He stopped skating, went to the floor guard and said, “Give my nephew his skates and he’ll go home!” The floor guard refused and immediately was beaten unmercifully by the old “Brewster Boys.”

Education

My high school days were exciting times, for they motivated and encouraged me to be the best I could. I attended Martin Luther King, Jr. Senior High School, a science-oriented school in the Detroit public school system. I chose King instead of Kettering High School because my uncle graduated from King and was an outstanding athlete.

I entered King in the 9th grade. Most of the upper class knew me from playing basketball but, more importantly, I was a “Brewster Boy” from the projects. Naturally, I had to maintain the image we wore with enormous pride.

Furthermore, in keeping with tradition, I would make the varsity basketball and baseball teams in the 9th grade, again showing “project” superiority over other kids. This did wonders for my reputation. In addition, I would be honored at season’s end as the Athletic Scholar of the Year, with a 3.9 G.P.A. I was moving into golden boy status as an athlete and scholar. Soon, I would discover the rigors of being a student athlete and leader.

I met Algebra and Geometry on the same road. It was like a major accident whereby I was placed on life support with my hopes and dreams attempting to revive me. Eventually, I overcame my struggles and became a decent student. My Junior and Senior years were great. I graduated Vice President of my Senior Class, Homecoming King and received a full scholarship to four-year Wayne State University.

I entered Wayne State University as a blue chip athlete from the public schools of Detroit. The school was 70% white and 30% foreign students, which resulted in culture shock for an African American boy from the East Side of Detroit. The academic challenge was overwhelming. I began my college tenure in the summer of 1977. This gave me a chance to prepare for the academic workload. This was an absolute necessity

in order for me to survive the rigors of student athlete. After I adjusted to the workload, I could manage my life as an athlete and student. We were required as athletes to meet in the weight room three days a week at 7:00 a.m. for a circuit flow workout with free weights. Thereafter, practice began with agility drills and playbook strategy sessions. Because I was a blue chip all-city athlete from Detroit, it was big news that I had signed a National Letter of Intent to attend Wayne State University and, therefore, stayed home to play basketball locally.

The press and print media made my first year an exciting one. In addition, I was under the gun of the greatest academic challenge of my life. Nevertheless, things went well and I managed to secure a starting role as the team's point guard for the upcoming season. The team's playing was only average that year with eight wins and eight losses. Of course, with more blue chippers from Detroit and other cities coming, the future looked bright and promising.

However, the unexpected happened. During my sophomore year, I adjusted academically, but I was having a horrible season athletically. Everything seemed to be working against me. The coach changed and I was in an unfortunate dispute with a tennis player over telephone usage in the athletic office. This person intentionally tried to destroy my career by writing all athletic department heads in an attempt to halt my career. The coach became more belligerent and angered. It was so bad that my grades began to fall off, so the coach benched me. The public school coaches of Detroit started calling the Athletic Department demanding an explanation of why I was not playing. My environment became a nightmare. But, the greatest thing was about to happen to me.

During my sophomore year, I met a young lady in an English Class who would take me to a place that would change my life forever. On July 20, 1979, I was asked to

frequent the church where this young lady had grown up. She and her family were well respected and proud of her success as a product of Second Canaan Baptist Church of Detroit, Michigan. The Reverend Dr. David Kelley was Pastor. But during this week, the church was in Revival and one of his three sons in the Pastoral Ministry was preaching. This particular son was a recovering addict and was sharing the Gospel Message in such a way that it convicted me to conversion. I remember that, while this young man was preaching, these words struck home: "You know that your life is a mess. Look at you. You need Jesus right now." Immediately, the light came on for me. I started crying uncontrollably. This young lady's family, my family, and the entire church were shocked. All I remember saying was, "I want to be a Christian, save me Jesus. I want to be a Christian." The four women ushers ushered me to the front of the church on that Thursday night and my life changed forever. I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior and, three days later, I was called and commissioned to preach the Gospel.

After this event, I spent my last two years in undergrad studying hard and enjoying moderate basketball success as a two-time all-conference player and a one-time defensive player of the year.

I graduated in December of 1982 and, three months before graduation, I married the girl with whom I visited the church. We became the parents of three beautiful children.

Professional Work Experience

After graduation from the Wayne State University School of Business, there was a recession in the country. It was apparent that the University of Michigan and Michigan State graduates received first shot at the few corporate jobs available. Therefore, in spite of the fact I had a Business degree, I took a job with the electronic retail giant, Tandy

Corporation (Radio Shack). I enjoyed a two-year stint with them showing outstanding potential to become a leader in the industry. But, two years were enough of counting I.C. Chips, even though I had earned “best store in sales” in my district as well as numerous championships in our head-to-head competitions in individual projects. I accepted a job offer with Uniroyal, Inc., which sold a new product called Naugahyde. This product had all the features of leather but was not leather. I was told that this job would provide the opportunity to become an executive leader in the company after six months. To my surprise, I worked in an office with people who of European decent who particularly hated people of African descent. After being cursed unmercifully by a white female co-worker and subjected to ridicule, rejection and humiliation, I terminated my employment.

By the grace of God, I received another job offer from Phillip Morris, USA. In this job, I would share great opportunities, but the humiliation was there as well. I tried to handle it better because of a wife and three children. I learned to endure being cursed, shoved, lied to and cheated by the customers I served. But God helped me endure until I was able to accumulate enough assets to leave and go to Seminary. I managed a territory of \$10 million a year. The best years of my life were spent working for Philip Morris. I purchased my first home, bought my first brand new car, and built my second house as a direct result of being affiliated with this company. Yet, my heart was set on going to Seminary to become a Pastor.

Ministry Preparation

Second Canaan Baptist Church, Detroit, Michigan is the place where I accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Canaan was a Bible-centered Church designed to build a people and community. I was 19 years old with a new outlook on life after I accepted Jesus. I returned to college with new enthusiasm and new vision. Baptism brought out my entire family to share in this sacred experience. This episode of my life was foundational for what God was preparing me to do.

Pilgrim Baptist Church of South Bend, Indiana is the Church I joined after leaving Michigan. It was an affluent Black Baptist Church. The Pastor was Dr. C. G. Rowlett. He was a great teacher, preacher, scholar, and theologian who was highly respected and an obvious disciplinarian. Rev. Rowlett recognized the gift of God in my life because of my commitment to family and the local Church. After a short while, he called me into his office to mention that Dr. Kelley had called from Detroit advising him of God's gift at work in my life and thought that it might serve the Church well to place me in Deaconship training.

In the beginning, I had no problem with the training. We met from house to house with Dr. Rowlett. But after a while, the call to preach revisited me and, as a result, I became rebellious in the Deacon's training program. I mentioned to Dr. Rowlett that I was called to preach and he said, "If God called you, he wouldn't take it away." This comment devastated me and encouraged me to rebel even more to the point that I would leave the church to go preach in Chicago, Illinois. Some friends in ministry in Michigan City, Indiana were my contacts to the preaching opportunity in a church in Chicago. Chicago was 100 miles away from Michigan City, and Michigan City was 45 miles from South Bend. Every weekend we went to Michigan City and drove to Chicago just for me

to have a chance to preach. Obviously, this was not going to work. My wife and children became disgusted with this travel and preaching. Eventually, I returned to Pilgrim and Rev. Rowlett with my head bowed in sorrow and repentance. He immediately and readily accepted me and said, "Go back to what you were doing before you left." From this point on, Dr. Rowlett gained my total commitment and loyalty. I did whatever I could to help the church grow and mature.

While going through Deacon's training, my wife and I divorced. Later, when I moved to Atlanta to pursue my training for the pastorate, the move was one of the most difficult challenges I would face because I was leaving the three beautiful children God gave me to pursue my call and put the pieces of my life back together again.

When Rev. Rowlett retired, Pilgrim called a new Pastor, Rev. H. Gregory Haygood. I was excited about his coming. He was young, bright, and a great preacher and teacher. He was seminary trained and a scholar in his own right. After working with him for several months as a Deacon, I mentioned I was going to move to Atlanta and attend Seminary at the Morehouse School of Religion at I.T.C. He said, "We won't let you leave here without a Preacher's license. We want you to leave here right." My heart leaped with joy. Immediately, he began to place things in order for my trial sermon.

Prior to my trial sermon, God would bring a wonderful gift into my life. I had said to the Lord after my divorce, "Lord if you bring my wife into this church, I would find her and marry her!" Early one Sunday morning, she was sitting in my Sunday school class with about 12 other ladies from Louisville, Kentucky. They were choir members at the church where Rev. Haygood had served as Minister of Music while in seminary. They were to sing at his Installation Service that afternoon.

After the AM service, I would meet the wife the Lord gave me. Judith Elaine and I were married on August 25, 1990, and I was licensed to preach September 30, 1990. My life changed forever.

Morehouse School of Religion at I.T.C.

The opportunity to attend seminary was a dream come true for me. The elders in my community said that “the call to ministry was a call to prepare.” For me, I thought seminary would be a place of acceptance and development. But I was in for a rude awakening.

After securing a moving van, my new wife and I headed for Atlanta, Georgia, the Mecca, the Who’s Who of the African American community. Atlanta and the Atlanta University Center were where our greatest minds and personalities were trained and developed. Undoubtedly, this place presented great expectations for my wife and me. We had only been married one month and we looked forward to moving south to the Black Mecca. Neither my wife nor I had ever lived in the South, although she was born in Alabama.

We were in for the shock of our lives. My wife immediately began looking for a job in the area. We assumed jobs would be plentiful in the “Mecca,” but to our surprise they were scarce and political. Ultimately, we both were employed and I started seminary part time. Seminary was nothing like what I expected. Apparently, I was naive and ignorant about certain systems. I thought that when I enrolled in seminary people there would embrace me and show me the way to effectual clergy development in pastoral ministry.

To my surprise there was no reception, no reaching out to the chosen of God. There was competition, manipulation, control, and theology foreign to my Christian up-

bringing. At that point, I began to defend the Bible with great fervor. After all, I was a member of a Church in Atlanta that was Bible-based, Christ-centered, Holy Spirit led and Mission Bound.

Dr. Mance Jackson said to me, “Wicker listen to what we are trying to teach you. How do you know if this book was written for the Jewish Community or for someone else? You don’t know, but listen to what we are teaching and you just might learn something.” This is exactly what I needed to open my mind. He was willing to engage me on this matter of seminary and encouraged me to listen and hear the transforming truth of Theological Education.

During the remainder of my training at the academy, my mind was opened to new truth and processes that eventually propelled me into the ocean of God, History, and Holy Writ. Seminary is the place that provided the foundations for critical thinking, discipline, and reflection about reality and the human psyche.

The great thing about this education, as it relates to my development, was the people. Seminary was a place filled with resourceful people who would help me understand better who I was. While sitting in the cafeteria with about eight other students, we were approached by one of the Deans. Dr. Clarence James Dean of the Morehouse School of Religion sat down to eat and chat for a moment. While leading us in discussion, he began talking about the type of people who attend seminary. During his discussion, he mentioned that a theological community such as this sharpens what God sends to the school. He then said, “You see this young man, Grady Wicker, Jr., he is a ‘Prophet.’ Prophets are not made in schools like this, but every now and then God sends a few to train in the academy to sharpen the ax head.” Immediately, the Dean got up and

left the area. The students looked shocked. I was shocked myself. Again, the Lord used another person to discern the office of my calling.

Seminary was also the place where I received no practical training for pastoral ministry. My one-year internship afforded me the opportunity to work with a ministry that shared all the attributes of pastoring, but this was not adequate for what I would later face in various pastorates. Only pastoring could prepare me to pastor, not academic training in the academy.

God has brought me a long way on my journey from the Brewster Projects of Detroit through theological training in Atlanta to my current pastorate today. I have changed and grown on this journey and I continue to grow through this doctoral program at United Theological Seminary. God has brought me to the place where this project of ministry developed out of the experiences of my life can provide a positive model for effective ministry for other pastors wanting to help children be prepared to live in our complex world. We cannot wait for disaster to strike before we act. The church must be the catalyst for progression, preparation, and practical pursuit in the Kingdom of God and the world in general. This project is a means of creating a vision for the role of the church in the 21st Century that she might maintain her posture as Bride to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Context Analysis

History

This project was conceived at the West Hunter Street Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. West Hunter is approximately 115 years old and located in Atlanta's historic West End. The Church stands tall among the cedar trees in the city of Atlanta. Some would call this 500-plus membership church a "silk stocking" because it is one of the oldest, strongest, and most influential churches in the Atlanta area. The Reverend Dr. Ralph Abernathy, lieutenant to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., pastored this historic church. One of the younger pastors to succeed Dr. Abernathy was Dr. T. DeWitt Smith, Jr. 2nd Vice President of the Progressive National Baptist Convention and a great civil rights leader himself. This congregation is totally African American and consists of white-collar and blue-collar workers. The majority of the congregation has obtained a degree of formal education and civil rights affiliation be it S.C.L.C., Operation Push/Rainbow, NAACP, or local, state and national politics.

During the developmental stages, after putting together a team of 36 people, presenting several training workshops, and beginning the first phase of the project, I received the call to pastor Canaan Baptist Church of Elkhart, Indiana. After about three months, I asked the membership to help me complete my project and the church agreed readily. Immediately, I established training workshops for two weeks on discipleship. I recruited 12 professionals from 12 different areas, 12 Context Associates, and 12 observation team members. I took my skeleton from West Hunter, made a proposal, distributed our objectives to every member of the team, and we were off and running. This was truly an act of desperation, but it proved to fit Canaan well.

Canaan Missionary Baptist Church was founded August 7, 1918. She is the first Black Baptist Church in Elkhart, Indiana. Her origin was a cooperative effort between her perspective members and the former Mt. Zion Baptist Church, now the Pilgrim Baptist Church of South Bend, Indiana. The Reverend E. Frazier, a minister at Mt. Zion, was a native of Elkhart, Indiana. There were twenty-six members, including Mr. and Mrs. William Braggs and their two children, Mr. and Mrs. Bridgeforth, Mrs. Lottie Coley and her husband, Mrs. Eva Bailey, Mr. and Mrs. H.C. Ingram, Mrs. Pear L. Robinson and her husband and Mrs. Rose McGhee and her four children. The first church meetings were held at 115 ½ South Main. The second location was 1412 South Sixth Street, which was a remodeled house used as a church while Canaan Missionary was being built. Presently, the church is located at 933 Fieldhouse Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana.

Canaan Missionary Baptist Church is located in Elkhart County on the south side of town. During the years preceding the elimination of slavery and the subsequent Northern migration, many blacks escaped to freedom on the Underground Railroad.

The Underground Railroad constituted routes established by anti-slavery groups to transport runaway slaves to freedom. One such route originated in Cincinnati, Ohio, which was a regional gathering station and moved through stations in Indiana at Columbus, Franklin, Indianapolis, Westfield and Logansport. The route continued through Vandalia and Calvin Center in Cass County. Six routes ran through Michigan and two of these intersected in Cass County.

The Indiana route crossed the Michiana area, the border between Michigan and Indiana. Moreover, Elkhart was invaded by “Copperheads,” Northern whites who determined to control the union but did not care whether or not slavery was abolished.

. . . many Blacks migrated to this area with the specific goal of seeking employment on the New York Central Railroad, a major railroad facility in Elkhart at the time. The major influx of Blacks into Elkhart occurred during the years of World War I. The attack on transoceanic shipping and the fighting in European immigrants who were the source of cheap labor. Consequently, the railroad

mounted a major recruiting effort to acquire more Blacks for the labor force.”⁴

Descriptive Statement

Elkhart County is located in northern Indiana, 150 miles north/northeast of Indianapolis, 100 miles east of Chicago, and 50 miles northwest of Ft. Wayne. Other cities and towns included in Elkhart County are Bristol, Middlebury, Millersburg, Nappanee and Wakarusa.

According to the official web site of the Elkhart County Government,⁵ Elkhart County was one of the first areas settled in northern Indiana. In 1830, the county held its first election. At that time, 75 votes were cast by citizens of the county and its surrounding territory. These voters elected eight people who served as the only county employees. Since that time, Elkhart has grown to nearly 183,000 citizens. County government has expanded to meet the needs of those citizens. Today, approximately 760 full-time employees, including 24 elected officials, provide services to the citizens of Elkhart County. These positions include jobs such as judges, clerks and the police department.

The following chart is part of a demographic study of the Elkhart area.⁶

People QuickFacts	Elkhart County	Indiana
Population, 2000	182,791	6,080,485
Population, percent change, 1990 to 2000	17.0%	9.7%

⁴ Faith Missionary Baptist Church, “Mortgage Burning” Edition (Elkhart, IN.: Faith Missionary Publishing Co., 1982), 8-16.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, 2001. Database on-line. Available from Dialog. ERIC ED 178312.

⁶ Ibid.

Persons under 5 years old, percent, 2000	8.1%	7.0%
Persons under 18 years old, percent 2000	28.9%	25.9%
Persons 65 years old and over, percent 2000	10.9%	12.4%
White persons, percent, 2000 (a)	86.4%	87.5%
Black or African American persons, percent, 2000 (a)	5.2%	8.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2000 (a)	0.3%	0.3%
Asian persons, percent, 2000 (a)	0.9%	1.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent 2000 (a)	Z	Z
Persons reporting some other race, percent, 2000 (a)	5.4%	1.6%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2000	1.8%	1.2%
Female population, percent, 2000	50.3%	51.0%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2000 (b)	8.9%	3.5%
White persons, not of Hispanic/Latino origin, percent, 2000	83.4%	85.8%
High school graduates, persons 25 years and over, 1990	69,896	2,639,456
College graduates, persons 25 years and over, 1990	13,646	542,941
Housing units, 2000	69,791	2,532,319
Homeownership rate, 2000	72.2%	71.4%
Households, 2000	66,154	2,336,306
Persons per household, 2000	2.72	2.53
Households with persons under 18 years, percent, 2000	39.6%	35.7%
Median household money income, 1997 model-based estimate	\$40,332	\$37,909
Persons below poverty, percent 1997 model-based estimate	8.7%	9.9%
Children below poverty, percent, 1997 model-based estimate	14.1%	14.8%

Business QuickFacts	Elkhart County	Indiana
Private nonfarm establishments with paid employees, 1998	5,030	146,197
Private nonfarm employment, 1998	109,830	2,540,866
Private nonfarm employment, percent change 1990-1998	16.3%	18.2%
Nonemployer establishments, 1997	9,788	302,082
Manufacturers shipments, 1997 (\$1000)	8,999,868	142,270,702
Retail sales, 1997 (\$1000)	1,973,606	57,241,650
Retail sales per capita, 1997	\$11,555	\$9,748
Minority-owned firms, 1992	292	13,865
Women-owned firms, 1992	4,421	125,411
Housing units authorized by building permits, 1999	1,127	41,469
Federal funds and grants, 1999 (\$1000)	462,329	26,828,144
Local government employment – full-time equivalent, 1997	6,339	220,747

Geography QuickFacts	Elkhart County	Indiana
Land area, 2000 (square miles)	464	35,867

Persons per square mile, 2000	393.9	169.5
Metropolitan Area	Elkhart-Goshen, IN MSA	18.2%

This project is essential for several reasons. First, it is important because it is the result of my life journey to this point. The project also articulates the chaos of self, community, family, work and education. The project will foster and facilitate mediums for more effective evangelism, worship, and ministry with children. Children are ones who continue the legacy of truth and light. Children are the *eschaton*. They must be inspired to be better and go further for a brighter future.

This project creates common ground for people to build community over chaos and love over hate. If we teach them how to worship, train, and love, we teach them about God.

Essentially, ignorance destroys, but knowledge is a building block of community and communication. When we talk and teach, hope is ever present in the dialogue of human discourse.

CHAPTER TWO

RESOURCES FOR THE PROJECT

This project was developed using eight primary literature resources. The in-depth examination of this material provided both the genesis of the idea and the eventual development of the thematic content of the project. An understanding of these resources is essential to deriving the maximum benefit from this document and crucial to replicating this model of ministry in a variety of contexts. These vital resources set forth and describe the socialization process from both a biblical and a practical perspective. In addition, these resources demonstrate the absolute importance of children being engaged in the process of holistic worship and Christian education.

In order to provide a fundamental understanding of the underlying ideas that shaped this project, this chapter will offer a brief review of each of the basic resources. The review is intended to indicate the contributions of the resource to the formulation of the project and to provide the reader's of this document with enough information to facilitate their further investigation into the thinking behind the methodology of the project. It is also hoped that these brief reviews will inspire readers to engage these ideas and resources in greater depth.

***Experiencing the Bible with Children*¹**

Dorothy Jean Furnish's, *Experiencing the Bible with Children* was a very useful resource in the formulating of the ideas that made up this project. In this book, she addresses such questions as: Where did the Bible come from? What does it mean to call the Bible the "Word of God?" and What does the Bible say? This information is dealt with in Section One of the book, which is entitled, "The Bible." Section Two of the book explores ways to help children discover Bible meanings. In order to do this, Furnish explains, we must understand the nature of childhood. She writes, "The goal of Bible Study with Children is to open the Bible in such a way that they are able to experience the Bible content and discover meaning for their present lives, while keeping open the possibility of future learning and meanings."² Methods and strategies for engaging children in the study of the Bible are dealt with in Section Three.

***Little Stories for Little Children*³**

Another resource that proved to be very helpful was Donna McKee Rhodes' Worship resource entitled, *Little Stories for Little Children*. This book suggests that using the narrative story approach during worship is an excellent method to teach God's love and biblical truths to children. This approach enables the children to feel the love and acceptance of their church family. The story should be concise, easy to follow, and contain one main point. This enables the children to stay focused on the theme. Rhodes

¹ Dorothy Jean Furnish, *Experiencing the Bible with Children* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990).

² Ibid., 7.

³ Donna McKee Rhodes, *Little Stories for Little Children: A Worship Resource* (Scottsdale, AZ: Herald Press, 1995).

explains some of the other techniques that can be used, such as Active Learning. As an example of the implementation of this technique during the project, I allowed children to take part in the sermon, “What’s in Your Cookie Jar?” The children who volunteered designed the Cookie Jar, placed paper cookies in the jar with scriptures, such as, Faith, Hope, and Redemption and explained to the other children their meanings. This process encouraged the children to be actively involved in the story within a structured setting. “Jesus taught by ‘Active Listening’ and ‘Active Learning’; the feeding of the five thousand and the foot washing ministry of Jesus were examples.”⁴

The method of teaching scripture to children, which is presented in this book, will help the children to remember the stories and apply them to life situations. This kind of remembrance and application will almost inevitably produce long-term effects.

*A Sourcebook for Teachers of Children*⁵

This resource deals with new ways to guide children in their own quest for discovering biblical truth and meaning. *A Sourcebook for Teachers of Children* by Dorothy Jean Furnish indicates that there are varied understandings of the Bible and demonstrates the best ways teach it to children. Furnish begins by stating the obvious, but often overlooked, truth that we should have a genuine concern for the children we teach. We should not approach influencing children in a teaching situation randomly or according to our personal favorite verses of scripture or even in reference to those verses that have meant the most to us in the development of our own Christian faith. Our

⁴ Ibid., 16.

⁵ Dorothy Jean Furnish, *A Sourcebook for Teachers of Children* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995).

concern should be to make sure that what the children are taught is consistent with their God-given nature and abilities and relevant to the lives they must live in today's world.

There must also be a serious concern for the integrity of the Bible. We must be certain that, when we teach the Bible to children, it is presented in such a way that the method and content are consistent with the nature of the Bible itself.

Therefore, in order to find out the best methods for teaching children the Bible, we must understand the nature of the Bible and the nature of the child. Only then can we move forward to teaching the children what the Bible says. Throughout all, we must be open to new ideas and creativity. The primary teaching/learning principle used in these sessions is, "We learn by doing and by reflecting on what we have done."⁶

Seven Ways of Teaching the Bible to Children⁷

A valuable resource in the development of this project was Barbara Bruce's *Seven Ways of Teaching the Bible to Children*. Bruce introduces the reader to the "Multiple Intelligence Theory." She states, "When educators limit their teaching to a few of the many ways that persons learn, they deprive children of their most preferred ways of learning."⁸ Limiting the methods of teaching forces all children to learn in the ways that are preferred only by some children or the teacher.

The seven intelligences that make up the Multiple Intelligence Theory are:

- 1) **Verbal/Linguistic** (the use of the spoken and written word in learning).

This particular intelligence enjoys language in all forms, both spoken

⁶ Ibid., 9.

⁷ Barbara Bruce, *Seven Ways of Teaching the Bible to Children* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996).

⁸ Ibid., 12.

and written. Given a choice, this child will read or write. Words are tools to be used in learning. This child becomes frustrated without verbal stimulation and challenging concepts.

- 2) **Logical/Mathematical** (the use of abstract patterns and concepts, numbers, linear and sequential thinking). Loves abstract thinking. Is logical and precise, enjoys figuring out solutions to problems. Given a choice, this child will use a calculator or computer. Rational thinking is a tool to be used in learning. This child finds it difficult to function in situations filled with confusion or chaos, too much repetition, and unspecified goals.
- 3) **Visual/Spatial** (the use of physically seeing and mentally picturing images as a way of learning). Sees information in terms of colors and pictures. Given a choice, this child will draw or map out a concept for clarity. This child will search for pictures, maps, and illustrations to “see” the concept. Pictures are tools to enhance learning. Too much printed material and too much writing will frustrate and discourage learning.
- 4) **Body/Kinesthetic** (the use of our bodies as a means of learning). Requires information through movement and manipulating objects. Given the choice, this child will walk through a concept and find physical objects to identify with. Opportunities to move and to manipulate objects provide this child with a successful learning experience. Too much sitting and inactivity for too long will cause this child to tune out.

- 5) **Musical/Rhythmic** (the use of our bodies as a means of learning). Loves to tap out a beat when thinking. This child learns best when surrounded by sound and will enjoy playing with rhythms. Given a choice, this child chooses music in any form for the best learning. Beat and rhythm are learning tools. This child is bored with long reading or writing assignments. Long lectures and large amounts of seatwork cause stress.
- 6) **Interpersonal** (the use of communicating with one or more persons to share learnings). Learns best in a team. Motivation and learning stem from cooperative learning tasks and bouncing ideas off others. Given a choice, this child will work with others on projects or shared study. Cooperative or paired learning is how this child flourishes. This child is stifled by introspection and long periods of silent study.
- 7) **Intrapersonal** (the use of inner knowledge and reflection as a means of learning). Loves private time to think and evaluate information. Given a choice, this child selects journaling and introspection. Reflection and self-determined learning paths are motivating. This child is uncomfortable with teacher-directed activities that appear without reason, direct instruction, and generalities.

From the above it is clear that there are many ways we can help children learn the Bible stories that form and shape their faith. By including all seven intelligences in teaching on a regular basis, we ensure that every child learns in his or her preferred way, we enrich our lessons by using many and varied techniques, we encourage new learning to take place, and we extend our ability to spread God's Word.

***Including Children in Worship: A Planning Guide for Congregations*⁹**

Leaders must be clear about worship itself before considering the role of children in worship. Elizabeth J. Sandell's *Including Children in Worship: A Planning Guide for Congregations* is a resource that can help leaders develop the appropriate clarity.

Worship is a community action in which both adults and children can participate. The message of the gospel suggests that the good news is for all ages. The church includes persons of all ages and God seeks and accepts worship from young and old alike. As the author points out, there is value for both children and adults when we include children in worship services. For young children particularly, participation in worship can become an experience of the faith community.

Sandell says that “when we respond to God’s call and become part of the *ekklesia*, the worshipping community, we may well decide to welcome children into congregational worship services.”¹⁰ Jesus welcomed little children and also directed his followers to become like little children. God commanded believers to lead children into faith. We cannot teach faith directly, however, we can teach about faith and provide experiences that encourage faith development.

⁹ Elizabeth J. Sandell, *Including Children in Worship: A Planning Guide for Congregations* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1991).

¹⁰ Ibid., 12.

***Following Jesus: More About Young Children and Worship*¹¹**

An enlightening resource is Sonja M. Stewart's *Following Jesus: More About Young Children and Worship*. Schoolteacher Stewart applied the same methods in her Sunday School classroom as she used in the public school system. She used biblical stories to teach theological concepts about God and Jesus and illustrate theological or moral beliefs. Unfortunately, it seemed to her as if the children were learning about God and not experiencing the presence of God. Dissatisfied, she began to research the subject. In her research with children aged three through eight, she discovered that they do have a fundamental awareness of the holy. Her research challenges the common myth that children cannot really know God and must grow up on their parents' faith until they reached adolescence when they must decide for themselves whether they want to follow Jesus. Stewart believes strongly that "children can know God now and develop a loving relationship with God, and not just learn about God."¹² Although children may not be interested in the various forms of religion that are prescribed for them, they are interested in God and their faith can be formed as they are invited into the stories and parables of scripture.

¹¹ Sonja M. Stewart *Following Jesus: More About Young Children and Worship* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2000).

¹² *Ibid.*, 3.

Handbook of Children's Religious Education¹³

Donald E. Ratcliff's *Handbook of Children's Religious Education* is a useful and comprehensive handbook. Of particular interest for this project of ministry is Chapter Six where the author focuses on the Social Context of Religious Education. Socialization is the process in which the values, roles, and skills of a society are learned and by which individuals in that society develop a sense of self. The author summarizes research on socialization as well as culture and ethnicity, in addition to presenting ideas from sociologists of education and religion that are pertinent to the religious education of children. Ratcliff also explores several situations for encouraging children's path. "The general contexts fall under the family, the school and the church. Keeping in mind the basic principles of socialization and culture. Both are prerequisites to exploring the development of a child's Education and Faith."¹⁴

Helping Children Care for God's People: 200 Ideas for teaching Stewardship and Mission¹⁵

This practical resource, Delia Halverson's *Helping Children Care for God's People: 200 Ideas for teaching Stewardship and Mission*, expounds on the importance of teaching stewardship and missions (service) to elementary and middle school youth. Grounded in scripture, this resource deals with teaching instruments including

¹³ Donald Ratcliff, *Handbook of Children's Religious Education* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1992).

¹⁴ Ibid., 10.

¹⁵ Delia Halverson, *Helping Children Care for God's People: 200 Ideas for Teaching Stewardship and Mission* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 10.

spontaneous experiences, art activities, drama and storytelling, writing, research, games, puzzles, music, and on-site experiences.

As an example, she suggests Creative Movement, which gives children permission to use body movements to express their feelings as long as it is not harmful to themselves or others. Words such as “love” can be expressed by clasping the hands over the heart; “joy” can be expressed by clapping the hands or raising them upward; “peace” or “love” flowing from us to others can be expressed by outstretched arms. Halverson stresses that it is very important that “we should allow children to experience themselves in our churches.”¹⁶

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a quick review of the work of scholars and writers whose perspectives on children’s worship, education, and the socialization process have influenced the formation of this project. This literature has suggested many creative and innovative approaches to expanding and enhancing ministries with children. If we are going to truly reach our children, we cannot continue to use antiquated approaches in a digital society. When one studies the available literature, one discovers that there is a constantly broadening approach to children’s ministry. However, all effective ministry must adapt to the environment and the context in which the ministry is taking place. In addition, time and context can present new and wonderful ways to utilize these principles and strategies for ministry.

¹⁶ Ibid., 10.

CHAPTER THREE

FOUNDATIONS OF THE PROJECT

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb
is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children
of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them;
they shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in
the gate. —Psalms 127:3-5 ¹

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, the word holistic is defined as emphasizing the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts.² Dr. Melva Wilson Costen writes, “worship is when people gather together who share many things in common. First and foremost, they gather to offer thanks and praise to God in and through Jesus Christ, and to be spiritually fed by the word of God.”³ Children’s ministry is a process of socialization designed to bring holistic development in the life of a child. This ministry is not only responsible for spiritual development, but it is also practical in nature to socialize the child into the mainstream of society.

The worship experience in the church community is without question essential for maturing the body of Christ. This asset is by far the strongest across cultural and racial lines. It is here where we meet our God who hears our pain, soothes us, and provides grace for our journey. The preaching moment is that experience which provides a bridge

¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word Publishing Group, 1997), 859.

² *The American Heritage Dictionary* (1984), s. v. “holistic.”

³ Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 13.

to the other side from our trouble. Although we live in a land flowing with milk and honey, it appears our honey experiences have caused us to lose ground with the very children we claim to love and support. It is these children whom we should be preparing for the *eschaton* of the church.

Not only must our evangelistic thrust in missions continue in and outside the local church, but the church herself must host a disciplined group of children who refuse to conform to this world's agenda. Although society perpetuates a non-relational method for community, our children must develop ways to conquer this material oasis and yield to the God of Jerusalem and his son Jesus Christ.

It is here where we reclaim, reconcile, and revive our children for God, setting the standard for a holistic experience and developing an operative praxis, a model to be emulated throughout the church community, to save our children in the children's worship in the local church.

Biblical Foundations

We begin our journey in the biblical foundations of this project with the writing of the Psalms. Particularly, we begin with Psalm 127:3-5.⁴ I chose this text to collaborate with my hypothesis to determine the role and effectiveness of the children in the worship experience. I will extract from these scriptures a full premise and construct a body of knowledge applicable for my objective.

As we prepare to engage these foundations, keep these words in mind: praxis, model, holistic, inclusive, biblical, theological, and historical. For it is out of these

⁴ *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1975), 447.

concepts that we will determine the effectiveness of children's worship as praxis for the development of children in the local church.

Psalms 120–134 are entitled “Songs of Ascents” according to the *New Interpreter's Bible*.⁵ These Songs of Ascent are Songs of Degrees.⁶ Historically, scholars have viewed these expressions in different ways. Some see in it a reference to songs sung by pilgrims going up (“ascending”) to Jerusalem. Others suggest that it has special reference to a supposed New Year's festival with a ceremonial ascent to the temple, at which time these Psalms were sung.

The Mishnaic Tractate Middoth (ii5) states that one of the 15 Psalms of Ascent was sung on each of the 15 steps leading from the women's court to the men's court of the Second Temple.⁷ It is also stated, according to the Mishna, that the Levites sang these Psalms during the all night ceremony of the first night of the Feast of Tabernacles.⁸

The noun translated “ascents” is a Hebrew root word *Ma'a lot* meaning to “go up.”⁹ The noun also means “steps,” or “stairs.” It is elsewhere used for the steps of the temple. This psalm was also written for Solomon; that is for the sake of Solomon, as Aben Ezra interprets it: of concerning Solomon as Jarchi: and so the Syriac Title, “It was said by David concerning Solomon.”¹⁰

⁵ William R. Taylor and W. Stewart McCullough, “Songs of Ascents,” *The New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. IV (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 1176, 1197, 1198, 1199.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ J. Liebreich, “The Songs of Ascents and the Priestly Blessing,” *JBL* LXXIV (1995), 33-36. *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, 447.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Taylor and McCullough, “Songs of Ascents.”

¹⁰ *The Online Bible*, [CD-ROM] (Winterbourne: Larry Pierce Press, 1996).

The Psalm 127:3 states, “Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord and the fruit of the womb is his reward.” There are two concepts expressed in each phrase that we must clarify at the onset. In Strong’s *New Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* “children” means *bane (ben)*, a “son,” which is understood to be a builder of the family name. Relationships in the widest sense include grandson, subject, nation, quality or condition.¹¹ It is interesting to know that the word “builder” is a part of the term “children” in the Hebrew, and furthermore, that *nachalah*—the Hebrew word for heritage—means “to inherit.”¹² To inherit means occupancy or an heirloom; an estate, patrimony or portion heritage, to inherit, inheritance, possession. Children are the heirloom, possession and inheritance from God. The writer also suggests that children are a blessing of life from God.

The Targum teaches, “the children of Christ, the anti-typical Solomon, are the gifts of his heavenly Father to him; his portion and inheritance, are a good heritage.”

The second concept to be clarified begins with the meaning of “fruit,” in the phrase “the fruit of the womb is his reward.” “‘Fruit’ in this text speaks to that of ‘children’ in the preceding clause; reward he gives to good men, not of debt, but grace: the Targum, a reward of good works.”¹³

Psalm 127:4 states, “as arrows are the hands of a mighty man, so are children of youth. They are to shout out with great strength, come with much force, and do execution, and do not return in vain.”¹⁴

¹¹ James Strong, *The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1996), 92.

¹² *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, 1423-1426.

¹³ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 92.

¹⁴ *Online Bible*.

Psalms 127:5 suggests that “happy is the man whose quiver is full of them.” That is his house full of them; called a quiver, referring to “arrows” mentioned before: to have many children was always reckoned a great temporal blessing and happiness, see: “Job 1:2, Psalms 128: 3, 4, and 6.”¹⁵ The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic and Arabic versions, render it, “that fills his desire has as many as he desires or wishes for: the Targum, who so Jarchi interprets the children of disciples of the wise men. It may be applied to young converts, the children of Christ and of the church; which, when numerous, is a blessing to him and her; see Isaiah 49: 20, 21; 53: 10, 11.”¹⁶

“They shall not be ashamed; the father and his children as Aben Ezra; parents rather are meant, who are not ashamed when they have many children, were preferred in honor to senior persons that had none; and they that had most of those that had fewest: and so with the Persians; see Gill on “Esther 5:11;”¹⁷

“But they shall speak with enemies in the gate: where courts of Judicature were kept: and so the Targum, In the gate of the house of judgement. The sense is their children should stand and plead the cause of their parents against their adverseries in courts of Judicature; or publicly before the eyes of all, as Aben Ezra; and spiritually may design such of Christ’s seed who are set for the defense of the Gospel, are valiant for truth on earth, and earnestly contend for it: meet the enemy in the gate, publicly oppose him, and behave themselves like men, and are strong.”¹⁸

Clearly, the exegesis set forth depicts children as warriors, soldiers with arrows ready to do battle for God and their parents for the sake of the Kingdom. The meaning is

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

that the Israelites were blessed to have a quiver full and it guaranteed the favor of God spiritually, materially, and physiologically.

This augments my argument about praxis for transformative behavior in the local church with children.

Theological Foundation

Dr. Owen C. Thomas, in his book, *Introduction of Theology*, writes, “The function and task of Theology is to test, criticize and revise the language which the church uses about God, to test it by its norms, namely, God’s self-disclosure to which testimony is given in the bible. This testing is necessary because the church’s language about God is fallible and can fall into error and confusion.”¹⁹

The task of revitalizing the children’s ministry of the church and involving the necessary groups creates some definite challenges. People tend to view the children’s ministry as an adjunct part of the entire worship experience, leaving their children to be cared for in the name of the church. If the ministry were not viewed as adjunct, those parents and helpers would not merely drop their kids off, but would stay and participate to the mutual growth of child and parent.

The Canaan Missionary Baptist Church theology regarding their children can be improved tremendously. On occasion, children attend in droves to take part in their own worship service that lasts about twenty-five minutes. They sing one song, read a scripture, pray a prayer, hear the sermon message, question the helpers and sometimes the minister, and go home.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Owen Thomas, *Introduction to Theology* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing Co., 1983), 2.

It requires more effort to develop an annual strategy for total development of a child. It takes blood, sweat, and tears to disciple children. There is a strong small group in Canaan Missionary Baptist Church who are committed to child development in the children's worship.

Justification for Teaching Professional Development or Life Skills

The biblical basis to support the contention that the Church should teach discipleship and professional development or life skills is the Gospel according to St. John 10:10. This text captures the words of our Lord Jesus speaking about the role of the chief shepherd. In his exposition, the Master draws a contrast between his role and the role of satan. He does this to remind his hearers that, although he is there and available to protect, defend, deliver, and bless, satan is busy reaping havoc on God's people. Jesus said, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal and to destroy: I am come that they might have life and that they may have it more abundantly."²⁰

There is no better way to destroy the Church than to keep her ignorant and not progressive regarding the context of life. As the cliché says, "Knowledge is Power." The more people know about surviving, thriving, and the abundant life, the more secure they

²⁰ John 10:10

become about their future. The more knowledge we have about life, the less influence ignorance has in our lives and community. To be ignorant to the devices of the adversary could possibly cost us peace of mind. Jesus reminds the people that satan and his imps consistently oppose the church in every area. Hosea the Prophet in his discourse with the nation of Israel said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”²¹ The writer of Proverbs suggests that, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.”²²

Robert Linthicum in his book *Empowering The Poor*, argues that people must learn to look at things over and over to get new insights. He suggests that people must think, reflect, and take action on one’s new journey. Dr. Bob uses a critical term for redirecting the lives of people caught in the web of mediocrity. The term “pedagogy” is derived from Greek word that means “profession or function of teacher; teaching; the art or science of teaching; esp., instruction in teaching methods.”²³

Dr. Bob suggest that there must be a dynamic working within the context of the people that provides the courage to bring about change for their lives and future. This project uses a community organizing principle as that dynamic to bring authentic transformation into the thinking of the people. This dynamic, known as action-reflection, frees people from the control of their old ways of thinking and acting, and enables persons to take charge of their own futures.²⁴

This action-reflection process feeds upon each other, with each action leading to a deeper and more insightful reflection, which in turn leads to a more courageous action.

²¹ Hosea 4:6

²² Proverbs 29:18

²³ Robert C. Linthicum, *Empowering The Poor: Community Organizing Among The City’s Rag, Tag and Bobtail* (Morovia, CA: World Vision Publishers, 1991), 2.

²⁴ Ibid.

Thus, a spiral is created with action pushing toward reflection that results in a more decisive action which in turn causes deeper and more analytical reflection which leads to further action, and thus to reflection. So, the spiral tends to drive deeper and deeper.

The pedagogy process is the method that helped develop this model of holistic development for the children in the church. The church must be more responsive to the needs of its children. The more highly technical modern society becomes, the more progressive and cutting-edge the churches must be. Churches in our society should be making strides that indicate that a great deal of innovation and creativity is at the church's disposal with the aid of the Holy Spirit. The churches have an obligation to be innovators, dealing with the internal and external holistic well-being of our children. The world is becoming more like a village and the church must become more systemic in its approach to the professional development.

Johann Friedrich Herbart

Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841) was a German Intellectual who spent the majority of his life teaching Philosophy and Education at two German Universities. He elevated teaching by making it a real science. He advocated five formal steps based upon a carefully thought through psychology. The system he developed for teaching content, including personal character and social morality, was ultimately transferred and applied to the teachings of the Bible. The Herbartian Theory enjoyed great favor in the secular world. Because of the haphazard use of the Bible text and biblical memorization, plus the need for a formal set of Christian education principles, the Herbartian concept was adopted by the church.²⁵

²⁵ Lois E. LeBar, *Education That Is Christian* (Westwood, NJ: Revell Company Publishers, 1958), 4.

Herbart considered content as all-important because, by relating ideas, he could actually form the mind from without. In order to impart this knowledge, the teacher had to awaken old ideas he. This connecting of new ideas with the old ideas is one of Herbart's greatest contributions to education, the principle of "Apperception."²⁶ Herbart's system developed five formal steps that should be followed in order to produce "Apperception":

1. Preparation. Past ideas related to the new idea are recalled. Only if the apperceptive masses are brought into consciousness will the pupil be interested in the new and give attention to it. If an idea cannot be brought to mind, it may be necessary to start with a familiar object and derive ideas from the sense perceptions that are obtained from it.
2. Presentation. The teacher makes the new material clear in the form of an idea or an object.
3. Association. The teacher points out likenesses and differences between the old and new material.
4. Generalization. Concrete ideas are now raised to the level of abstraction, for this is the mind working at its highest capacity.
5. Application. The student now uses the new generalizations to solve related questions in that area of knowledge, such as solving problems in geometry or the translating of sentences of a foreign language.²⁷

This systematic procedure was designed to generate a process for developing new concepts and ideas. Herbart believed that new ideas on top of previous ideas would

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

prove greater at the end than at the beginning. Using his system, one can develop a structure from without that leads to a transformation from within. Herbart argued that the main skill needed for teaching was the ability to connect new ideas with the old.

Concerning the development of Herbart's idea of improving one's moral character, he set forth a process called "circle of thought." Herbart argues that "knowing" is the primary function of the mind. Feeling, willing, and doing are automatically, inevitably, derived from knowing.²⁸

Additionally, when ideas reinforce each other in the struggle to push back into consciousness, the result is pleasure; when they are so different that they repel each other, the result is displeasure. He believed that the totality of ideas constitute the will that expresses itself in action. Ideas that command full attention result in action. Therefore, Herbart believed that by manipulating the pupil's ideas, the teacher is able to determine how he will feel and choose and act. He believed that right ideas result in moral character.²⁹

Although the Herbartian Theory developed in a secular context, it is the source for the development of Christian education. Its principles can also be used for progressive ministry in the twenty-first century. This is my justification for why the church should teach professional development or life skills alongside Christian discipleship and thrive in the new millennium.

Historical Foundation

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

The Canaan Missionary Baptist Church is over 83 years of age and is a lead church in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.. It is a church steeped in God, but the theology of the church is that of love, justice, and mercy. Justice is clearly articulated in every aspect and function of the church. Its language, actions, commitments, and financial support all saturate the church and its function. Everything to do with ministry is interrelated to justice and mercy.

Canaan Missionary is highly affluent and pristine. Theologians call churches of this nature “silk stocking churches” because of the economic status of the members that attend the worship services.

The Canaan Missionary Baptist Church is located on the historic South Side of Elkhart, but has no major ministries directed at salvaging the people around its church. Yet, they speak eloquently for the poor, downtrodden and disadvantaged.

It appears that even the ministries themselves have more of a political undertone than actual ministry. Behavior denotes what one really and theologically believes. The congregation is full of educated retired business people, care givers, schoolteachers and blue-collar persons. The worship is spiritually high and moving at times. However, it can appear on occasion to be old, drab, and somewhat depressing, depending on what choir sings and if the pastor is preaching. The budget is about \$250,000 with about 400 plus members. Bible study attendance is extremely low and the previous pastor was all over the nation preaching and teaching.

Romans 15:1 (KJV) suggests that, “the strong must bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please self.” Faith Missionary Baptist Church in her own way is actualizing these truths according to the Apostle Paul.

Personally, in my reflection regarding my own history, the process of ongoing self-discovery, refinement, rediscovery, rejection, brokenness, new insights and relationships keeps me moving forward on my journey. My past, on some occasions, has in some ways repeated itself.

However, in other situations I make new discoveries about myself—particularly about who I am under pressure. Furthermore, my historical brokenness affords me a platform to transcend my perceived lost ground and enables me to bounce back with great expectation.

Certainly, the past serves as a vivid reminder of the pain I encountered for making mistakes and doing the right things. However, my expectation of a more positive emerging present and an outstanding future awaits me. Now that I have a past, I can engage the future with wisdom and fervor, trusting that my experiences will make me better as a person, a parent, a pastor, and most of all, a Christian.

Historically, as a denomination, Black Baptists view the preaching moment as the central part and focus of the worship experience. The pulpit, located in the center of the sanctuary denoted, “The Preached Word.” The “Word of God” is foremost in all the activity in the worship experience. Children, on the other hand, receive biblical instruction primarily in the Sunday School classes on Sunday morning. If they did not attend Sunday School, there was no place provided for their acquaintance with Jesus Christ, except Vacation Bible School. Vacation Bible School takes place annually for one or two weeks. A concerted effort was made for the children in the neighborhood to frequent the church during the Summer Vacation Bible School. Here was an opportunity to meet other Christians and learn about Jesus. Nevertheless, in spite of this annual effort

with punch, cookies and juice, our children did not, outside of these situations, receive special nurture in the local church.

Although many non-traditional African American Churches have developed contemporary worship services for our children, it is not yet normative in our culture. Our children continue in boredom, writing, drawing pictures on tithing envelopes, moving, wiggling, and crying during regular worship service because of the lack of creativity and refusal to move forward meeting the challenges of worship today.

Meanwhile, our kids come to church frustrated and leave more frustrated, asking themselves, “Why is there a need to attend church when all you do is sit and listen to the pastor?” Some parents are smart enough to leave these churches and find churches that speak to their concerns as God’s babies in the body of Christ.

It is apparent that Faith Missionary Baptist Church cares about her children. She demonstrates her concern particularly on Easter, Youth Day, and the second, third and fourth Sundays of the month. The children between the ages of 5-13 attend their own worship services located in a second floor classroom in the west section of the church. This classroom is arranged like a sanctuary with a lectern located in the center. During their worship service, the children sing a song, scripture is read, prayer is offered, and the preacher makes a presentation. In addition to the preacher and the musician, there is at least one volunteer worker present who leads the children’s worship. Refreshments are usually served following a question and answer period.

The majority of the sermons are presented in a narrative context to win the children to Jesus Christ. The sermonic discourse is also used to make value statements about the importance of Christian character development and competence as young believers in Christ.

Additionally, when we look at the black church there are several factors that make up its fabric and its effectiveness. First, we discover the powerful genres of spirituals, gospel music, poetry and preaching.

Negro spirituals are the religious songs sung by African Americans since the earliest days of slavery and first gathered in a book in 1801 by the black church leader, Richard Allen.³⁰

Gospel music emerged in the first decades of the Twentieth Century as blues and early jazz styles of singing and playing instruments began to exert a powerful impact on the way church musicians conceived their task.³¹ These singers, says poet and critic Sterling A. Brown,

... fight the devil using what have been considered the devil's weapons. Tambourines, cymbals, trumpets, and even trombones and bass fiddles are now accepted in some churches. The devil has no right to all that fine rhythm, so a joyful noise is made unto the Lord with bounce and swing.³²

Sermons are a complex oratorical form in the African American church. Their exact specifics vary depending on one's location in the country. Folklorist Gerald L. Davis has outlined several features that define the black sermon as a distinctive form. According to Davis, the typical African American sermon has several parts:

- (1) the disclaimer, in which the preacher makes clear that the morning's message comes not from him or her alone but God;
- (2) the statement of theme as drawn from specific biblical readings;
- (3) the literal and then the broad interpretation of the biblical word;

³⁰ Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Nellie Y. McKay, eds. *The Norton Anthology, African American Literature* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1997), 5.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

³² *Ibid.*, 16.

- (4) the formulaic body of the sermon, the morning's main message; and
- (5) the closing statement, rarely a summary as such but rather an open-ended conclusion leading to the next part of the service.³³

He argues that, within this framework, black preachers are storytellers, actors, and singers who use their voices and bodies to lend dynamism to the performed word. Sometimes a sermon will embody the preacher's own personal witness of God's ways in the world.

The Great Didactic

In developing a holistic model for training youth, it would also be well to keep in mind the following by John Amos Comenius (1592-1670):

THE GREAT DIDACTIC

Setting forth

The Whole Art of Teaching all

Things to all Men

or

³³ Ibid., 69.

A certain Inducement to found such Schools in all of the
 Parishes, Towns, and Villages of every Christian Kingdom,
 That the entire Youth of both Sexes,
 None being excepted, shall,

Quickly, Pleasantly, Thoroughly

Become learned in the Sciences, Pure in Morals
 Trained in Piety, and in this manner Instructed
 in all things necessary for
 the present and for
 the future life.

“Let the main object of this, our Didactic, be as follows:

*To seek and to find a method of instruction, by which the teachers
 may teach less, but learners may learn more, by which schools
 may be the scene of less noise, aversion, and useless labor,
 but of more leisure, enjoyment, and solid progress; and
 through which the Christian community may have less
 darkness, perplexity, and dissention, but on the other
 hand, more light, orderliness, peace, and rest.”*

CHAPTER FOUR

MINISTRY INTERVENTION

In my project design, I utilized two methods of research: research and data analysis. My objective was to create a holistic praxis and paradigm to expand one's view of worship and to teach our children that the developmental process is an every day pursuit.

The following methods of extracting the data and research were utilized:

1. Sermons were used to address the issue of communication. The sermons were presented in three ways: oration, object ministry, and role-play. In this process, we discovered that the King James Version of the Bible was an obstruction to full comprehension of scripture. The antiquated language of this version required some translation in order to build comprehension, competence, and understanding.
2. Bible study workshops were designed to increase the children's comprehension and knowledge base of scripture. Several Bible translations were used, but the primary translation was the New International Version. We discovered through this approach the necessity of using tools, methods, and translations that utilized contemporary language if we were to have much success in encouraging personal growth and development in our children.

3. The observation strategy provided us with a unique laboratory setting to glean from the children the data and research necessary to verify the hypothesis. The workshops of bible study, financial planning, foreign language, etiquette, and computer science created the community environment and socialization process to prepare our children to live successfully in society.

The three teams that facilitated this project are as follows:

- The Context Associates facilitated the classroom instruction. They were responsible for recruiting, training, and workshop observation and facilitation.
- The Observation Team consisted of 12 volunteers working in three groups of four people. Once a month, each group spent Saturday and Sunday observing and recording data. Particularly, they observed and recorded the activity and interactions of the Context Associates with the children. This team was responsible for analyzing all of the data from the surveys, the case studies, and the questionnaires.
- The Workshop Leaders were the experts responsible for teaching the socialization skills for professional growth and development. At the end of each month the, data was tallied and personal thoughts and reflections were provided by Context Associates and the Observation Team to expand upon their findings.

Results of the Intervention

After an assessment of the church's ministry, I determined it was urgently necessary to implement this ministry model. I noticed when requesting the involvement of the church that some scoffed at the idea of building a "socialization process" that would enable our children to be socialized into society. Although they were fully aware that this was critical to the spiritual and practical development of our children, they were reluctant to become involved in this work for some reason.

Possibly this was merely the normal apprehension regarding new things that people often feel. As our advertising increased, the anxiety seemed to diminish and volunteers began to inquire about joining our team.

Additionally, some thought this was merely an academic exercise that would lead to nothing new, since they felt that it would take a number of years to secure any relevant information. Some believed that this project was not a real necessity because they felt that computer technology in itself was a process to socialize children. However, part of the people believed that what we were doing would benefit the children and transform the community.

This model of ministry was a success because of the internal and external observation teams and their commitment to improving the process for socializing our children into society. The method of implementation brought a great deal of community interest from our sister churches. In fact, many churches are trying to duplicate our program with the same and similar approaches to biblical competency and life skill classes.

The Context Associates recommended that all of our children go through the classes in order to assist and sharpen their skills. We believe that, once a child effectively learns new skills, they should immediately teach the new skills to someone else.

Several factors contributed to the success of this model:

- Teachable children with loving facilitators.
- A commitment to help children survive in society.
- The joy of seeing children grow and mature.
- The involvement of parents and guardians.
- Professionals who love children.
- A church family open to growth and positive change.
- Use of the New International Version of the Bible.

The weekend we presented the first sermon and classes, we had about 15 children in attendance. After the word went out about the bible studies and the type of classes being offered, we experienced a minimum of 50 children per week. Toward the end of our sessions, we averaged 100 children per week. We rotated the children in and out of each class during the scheduled times of the courses.

The Professional Development workshops that took place on Saturdays averaged twenty children in four classes. There were eighty children every other month in attendance. The longer the classes, the more popular they became in the community. The results were very pleasing. The children convinced the facilitators that they were willing to sacrifice Saturdays when the programs were full of excitement and creativity. The most challenging segment of this process was not the children, but getting parental support to encourage excellence. The classes were at least 45 minutes and no longer than

an hour. Every Sunday the children would ask, “Is this the weekend for our life skills classes?”

The Professional Development classes gave our children an incredible amount of self-confidence that was displayed during their interaction with staff and peers. We observed persons developing into leaders who, at one time, had spent most of their time trying to isolate themselves from their peers. It appeared that our hope for these children to become the next community leaders was unfolding right before our eyes. The classes provided the practical and social skills necessary to develop the relationship between God, children, and professional development.

Moreover, this model changed the way the children perceived the pursuit of God and education. For the first time, they understood the correlation between Christian education and discipleship. They understood that both worked side by side for the glory of God and the development of the child. Theologically, the children could speak with clarity about who God is and their purpose for inhabiting the earth. This project reduced the fear factor in the children and caused an intentional assertiveness in the pursuit of goals and objectives.

Additionally, children often wonder if their future will be bright. These children displayed the courage to engage the future and not sit around wondering what to do. They understood that excellence can send one to the top of his class and provide the kind of standard of living that only a few enjoy. This model of ministry provided skills to enhance the children’s decision-making process, relationship building, and their determination to be the best representative for God.

Content of the Appendices

The appendices to this document provide examples of the instruments used to collect the data and also the analysis of the information from this project.

Appendix “A” consists of charts on two translations of the Bible—the King James and the New International. These charts show the differences in reading comprehension and understanding over a six-month period for children in grades 4 through 6 and grades 7 through 8.

Appendix “B” consists of ideas for Surveys and Questionnaires necessary to capture thoughts, moods, successes, failures, and the transformation process of the participants.

Appendix “C” contains the Procedural Analysis forms that gathered the data necessary for the Qualitative Analysis segment concerning a research strategy.

Appendix “D” presents the process for Parental involvement in the project. The results of the Parent Survey provide feedback concerning the roles and responsibility of parents in a project of this nature.

Appendix “E,” the sample Children’s Survey form and results, demonstrates the process designed to measure the children’s individual and collective involvement in the project overall.

Appendix “F” shows some marketing tools and ideas necessary to promote this venture. These were instituted to provide a description and ideas needed to reproduce the results of the project.

Appendix “G” is to remind the clergy and laity of the overwhelming task of improving or rebuilding a process of socialization for our Children.

Appendix “H” demonstrates the differences in Bible translations and shows how they can enhance or hinder one’s ability to understand the Word of God.

Appendix “I” is a sample that demonstrates the language difference between the translations. This reminds us of the need to use practical biblical language so that any reader can read. This can assist in making discipleship easier.

Appendix “J” is an inspirational quotation for all of us to keep in mind as we facilitate God’s Business.

Summary of Results

These results clearly confirmed the need for programs like this for our children and proved that the model worked in the church community. Community leaders, pastors, and educators saw how effective the church could be in developing both the spiritual and the practical side of a child. As a result, we began a dialogue concerning collaboration between church and schools for developing a socialization process for children.

The model used dramatically changed our children. Many expressed considerable excitement about learning to use other tools such as bible translations for spiritual growth.

The life skills classes also gave them an incredible amount of self-confidence, competence, and the courage to be leaders in their community. These classes provided for them a comprehensive and clear understanding of God and the fellow man.

Moreover, this model changed the way they perceived the pursuit of God and education. Theologically, the children could speak with clarity about who God is and what their purpose was as members in the family of God. The project enabled the children to develop self-esteem that gave them self-confidence and the assertiveness to pursue their goals and objectives.

Additionally, the fear of not being able to provide for themselves in the future was reduced because the life skills classes provided them with something that would help keep food on the table and clothes on their backs if they choose not to attend college or university.

This model of ministry also helped them understand the process of decision-making and how to choose those people, places and things that would promote healthy relationships. The life skills classes taught the children to pursue life with excellence and undaunted determination.

Surveys

This process began with a vision to improve the children's ministry, but it is growing into a new church. The children come with joy and excitement as they line up in project communities to ride on the Faith Missionary Baptist Church Bus. Because so many are so excited, it is sometimes difficult to calm them down for ministry.

Surveys were the instruments we used to extract data. This particular survey was designed with only the shapes of faces. The questions on the survey asked the child to circle the face that most described what they were feeling about that day's sermon.

The children circled the face with Joy from one sentence to the next. They stated that they were happy to be participating in the program. The facilitators felt a surge of encouragement to know how important it was for them to be part of the process of Children's Church. One of the facilitators commented, "I will never be the same having observed this part of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Changes in the Children

There are a number of children who have changed completely as a result of the preaching and teaching of this socialization process.

First, we discovered that a number of children have determined to be ministers of the Gospel. There are at least seven boys who say they would like to be a minister when they get older. I shared with them that they should pray and ask God to show them the way they should go concerning their life and ministry.

These boys love to read scripture, pray, take lead roles in classroom instruction, and assist in any and all matters of the church. They are first to volunteer for the role-plays and dramas during the preaching and teaching times. They have assisted me with many children. Moreover, these boys actually attempt to preach and act like the pastor.

This is good for our church and gives the children affirmation that church is not a boring place, but a place of joy, refuge, and development.

Testimonies

The comments of the children themselves provided valuable feedback and insight into the effectiveness of the ministry project.

Erica, 9: “I enjoy reading the Bible because the verses are easier to understand. Learning to pronounce the words in the NIV Bible is easier, not as difficult as the other bible.”

Jamie, 12: “Pastor Wicker, I don’t seem to understand the Bible like I should. The words are too difficult to pronounce.”

- Beverly, 14: "The Bible is a hard book to understand. However, this NIV bible makes it easy to read and understand the scriptures. I've been a Christian since I was seven, but I understand everything I read with the NIV Bible."
- Kevin, 13: "Learning God's word with the NIV Bible makes reading fun. Also, to have a chance to use computers at church keeps me from getting into trouble away from home. I'm not bored with church anymore."
- Dewayne, 10: "Learning how to speak Spanish will help me understand my classmates when they speak Spanish. I always wanted to communicate with my friends in their own language."
- Shaniqu, 13: "I have desired to do hair and nails all my life. It's nice when you can come to church and learn to do hair and study about Jesus."
- Tommy, 15: "Computer training will prepare me for my career in computer engineering. It's nice for the church to offer classes like this one. I can learn about computers and Jesus in the church."
- Renee, 14: "I will be able to get a job right away after these welding classes. I didn't know churches cared about us this way."
- Kerri, 12: "We must learn that we might help others to learn whatever the area maybe."

The parents of one child said, “Reverend Wicker, my children will be prepared for life with Jesus with the life skills learned here at the church.”

Results

In our research and analysis, we discovered certain truths concerning our research results. First, we determined that, over a five-month period, there was tangible improvement in the children’s comprehension of scripture when we used the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible. Secondly, there was approximately a 30% to 50% improvement, which resulted in the presentation of my hypothesis being considered a reasonable truth.

We took the following steps to obtain these results: we had two groups of children (4th – 6th graders and 7th – 8th graders) from which to assess our research results. On rotating weeks, we took each group, led by a facilitator, and read a scripture story to the children. The reading one week was from the King James Version (KJV). The next week, the same reading was from the NIV translation.

In order to measure the success of the process, we used a number of analytical tools. We started with “matching” words with definitions. We also matched the KJV words with NIV words to determine if the children knew which words had the same meaning. Additionally, we used a sheet listing all the KJV words and asked the children to define them. We also gave the children the same words in the NIV to determine if they could define those words as well. Finally, we set up a list of words with their proper definitions in the KJV and the NIV to determine if the children could match the words with the proper definitions from both translations.

Each session took approximately one hour to determine if our children had reached an objective for the comprehension of the scripture lesson. We discovered during

the process that a pattern emerged showing the effectiveness of the NIV translation over the KJV of the Bible.

Based upon this process, we were able to determine the results listed in this document. In addition, the following graphs will provide visible analysis, indicating the results of our research on a month-by-month basis.

From the testing of my hypothesis with the previously mentioned research tools, we concluded that the KJV translation proved somewhat of a hindrance to learning and comprehension in the study of scripture for knowledge and understanding.

Scripture Comprehension Results

The results of our research are set out in graphs in Appendix A. The following commentary is based upon those charts.

In the first graph (A1 Chart 1), we provide the results of scripture comprehension of the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible on a scale of 1-100%. The 4th–6th graders scored an average of 5% during the months of January, March and April. This indicates that they have a minimal understanding of the scriptural lesson presented in the King James language during those months. There is a slight increase of 3% in the month of February, indicating an apparent better understanding of the scriptural lesson. In May, there is a decline in the percentage to 4%. This is due apparently to a decline in the understanding of the scriptural lesson in the King James language.

During this 5-month period, we show minimal comprehension of the scriptural lesson from the KJV of the Bible.

The second graph (A2 Chart 2), represents the scripture comprehension results with 7th–8th grades. As the graph indicates, the level of comprehension increased, primarily due to the difference in age and maturity. However, there appears to be the

same results as with the younger children, but at a slightly higher level. In the month of January, we discover there is a 20% comprehensive understanding of the scriptural lesson presented in the KJV of the Bible. In February, we have a 5% decrease in comprehension, apparently due to a weaker understanding of the scriptural lesson. March again reaches 20% comprehension of the scriptural lesson. April experiences a 3% decline in comprehension due to the difficulty of the scriptural lesson. May has a significant 5% increase, apparently because of an increase in understanding the scriptural lesson presented in the King James translation. Overall, the comprehension level is higher for the 7th and 8th graders, but the different understandings of the scriptural lessons in King James language are basically the same.

The third graph (B1 Chart 1) presents the 4th – 6th graders listening to the same scriptural lessons with the New International Version (NIV) translation of the Bible. We discovered that on average during the month of January, March and April, there was moderate understanding. However in February, the comprehension level of the scriptural lesson in the NIV rose 10%. This was due to the ease of understanding the lesson. May appears to have skyrocketed in the percentage of comprehension of the scriptural lesson in the NIV. There was a 30% increase, apparently because the scriptural lesson presented in the NIV translation was better understood.

During this five-month period, there is a marginal increase in scriptural comprehension using the NIV translation of the Bible.

Graph four (B2 Chart 2) represents the results of 7th – 8th graders comprehension of scriptural lessons presented in the NIV translation of scripture. There appears to be an overall improvement in the scores, due to student age and maturity. For the month of January, students showed a 50% comprehensive understanding of the scriptural lesson

presented in the NIV translation of scripture. The month of February shows a decline of 30% in scriptural comprehension of the scriptural lesson in the NIV translation. March moves up 10% for comprehension of the scripture lesson for the month. April experiences a 40% understanding of scripture in the NIV translation. May moves the chart back to where this group began with scriptural comprehension for the NIV translation at the 50% mark.

Overall, this is good improvement in comprehension of the scriptural lessons in the NIV translation. This is a significant difference when compared with the KJV translation of the Bible.

Finally, the fifth graph (C1 Chart 1) represents a side-by-side correlation of the comprehension of the scriptural lessons from the KJV and NIV translations. The dark markings are the NIV translations scores and the light markings are the KJV translation scores. The clear indication of this analysis is that there is a major advantage for using the NIV translation instead of the KJV. The NIV translation provides a better understanding of scriptural lessons in the everyday language that children are exposed daily.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

We began our field experience with an announcement of the dissertation process and how Canaan Missionary would be needed to assist in this effort. Uniquely, the children's ministry would enable me to develop a new praxis and paradigm for doing children's ministry anywhere.

Our next efforts required the recruiting of Context Associates to assist in the facilitation of this process. The resulting Context Associates consisted of seven people chosen by the student to assist in the planning and implementation of the ministry model within the context. These persons were chosen from the actual context and were already involved personally in the children's ministry of the church. The Associates also helped me design my ministry model. We evaluated the entire children's ministry process and determined what were the needs. The Associates proposed some corrections and improvements for the process. At times, we struggled to determine what was necessary and effective and what was a waste of time. We floundered occasionally, but managed to come together more focused and determined to put forth our best efforts.

Then we formed an internal and external investigation team. These consisted of two teams of six each. One team investigated by observation and journaling only, while the other team facilitated and wrote about their interaction with the students in the actual context.

After forming the investigative teams, we developed a timeline of our goals, dates, and objectives for starting and completing our process. We also developed a number of tools needed to implement the program for the children's ministry.

At the onset, I informed the teams that we would use qualitative research to secure the information we needed. This would enable us to be flexible in our attempts to record and track data. In order to be timely and effective, we tallied all data, journals, and observations at the end of the month. We then reflected on the data. In addition, each person wrote a provisional report concerning their participation and observations regarding their role in this process. We also used questionnaires to determine if our material was practical and appropriate for what we were trying to accomplish. The questions were standard and basic. One questionnaire was developed based upon pictures to gauge the student and the effectiveness of the process. This tool was exceptionally effective.

We also created a team of three Professional Associates with terminal academic degrees. The team of Professional Associates was designed to help me by providing advice, consultation, critique, and asking probing questions. They set a standard of excellence to uphold. The relationship with this team was an open relationship with no coercive authority. We worked as peers, not as superior over the student. Dr. Asa Hillard, Dr. Edward Wimberly, and Dr. Linda Thompson provided wonderful assistance in this process.

The expectations of the program for Professional Associates were:

- to provide input for the program, including resources, suggested courses, worship laboratories, or other educational experiences that would enhance the program, and

- to assist in the process of analysis and reflection by questioning and probing to assure depth of understanding in academic and experiential learning.

The worship area and classrooms became our laboratory of learning. We preached, taught, read, gathered and tallied the data. Our methods for sermonic delivery made our process exciting and creative. We used sermons, drama, role-play, reading, show and tell and classes. Usually, the teams rotated from week to week. We developed twelve notebooks, placed an introduction letter in the notebook, provided background on the qualitative research analysis method and what we hoped to accomplish, and trained the information team how to extract data. We interviewed, probed, and questioned the parents who placed their children in the Children's Ministry. We served the children both spiritual and material food.

On occasion, we took the children on field trips to break up the monotony of research and action. Overall, the children enjoyed the learning. Our children proved to be extremely patient and agreeable in our pursuit of data. They occasionally got upset, but they continued to provide what "Pastor Wicker" needed.

The overall process took a tremendous effort of coordination, cooperation, and community. For the purpose of presenting a model of replication, this process worked in three phases:

First, I had the responsibility of persuading my church at a business meeting to join me in this effort to meet the needs of our children. This project began at the West Hunter Street Baptist Church and concluded at Canaan Baptist Church of Elkhart Indiana. Phase I involved designing a project proposal that outlined every step of the process involving myself, the teams, and the churches. This process began in January and ended

in June, a total of six months. After hearing my proposal, the church accepted it and agreed to work and volunteer. Immediately, we were off and running. Sunday morning we began the first of a series of recruiting campaign announcements. We developed flyers and pleaded for volunteers to work in one of three areas.

First, we needed Context Associates, who would facilitate classroom instruction and use the hands-on task-oriented approach. They were responsible for the legwork and details of this phase, which included all recruiting, training, workshop observation, and facilitation. I determined that we needed approximately 12 persons to commit to be Context Associates.

Second, I created an observation team with three persons to a team of four. Twice a month for six months, each group spent time working with the kids. These groups spent Saturdays and Sundays observing, journaling, and recording data in discipleship training and professional development. Particularly, this group monitored the interaction between the students and the Context Associates. The team was responsible for analyzing all the data from the surveys, case studies, and questionnaires.

Third, I developed a team of twelve professionals or experts who are all Christians. These persons are responsible for teaching the kids about their professions. Prior to their involvement, I taught two workshops on discipleship. The material used for training was the “Master life Series” by Avery T. Willis. Our main concern with this group was to make certain they were the Lord’s disciples first and foremost. This group would develop in our children the drive to strive for excellence in the work world. They are the persons who would sharpen our children’s skills. The children’s professional development would be measured at the end of the month by examples of role-play,

corporate games, relationship building, sales and marketing tools, and memory work.

This process provided a platform for us to expand upon our findings.

Phase II consisted of the implementation of the process. The first and third Saturdays of the month we taught computer literacy, Spanish, financial planning, and etiquette. The 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month we taught discipleship through Bible study, preaching, teaching, drama, and role-play. The Context Associates and discipleship trainers spent the majority of the time with the kids because the work demanded their presence. Journaling and data analysis were required in every phase of the project. The last Friday of every month the entire team of 36 people would gather with myself to tally all data and discuss our objectives for the next month. If there were any problems with logistics, we would resolve them at that time.

Phase III was designed to help us determine that an urban location worked well for us. However, this model was mobile and could be used in the rural setting, also. Those who use this program in the rural setting must have a fixed commitment for volunteers and transportation. All transportation should be provided by the church to insure that kids will be timely and prepared to work. Class time was 45minutes per class and the kids must complete a total of four classes on Saturday and 1hour and 30 minutes on Sunday. Again, the discipleship training was every 2nd and 4th Sunday. The professional development classes met every 1st and 3rd Saturday. This is the overall lesson plan used for this model and can be used to reproduce this project.

Sample Sermon Outlines

Date	Scripture	Subject
January 7, 2001	Romans 8:23	“The Body” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have the Spirit • We are adopted • We have redemption
January 14, 2001	Luke 2:38	“Give Thanks” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly • Unto the Lord • As a witness
January 21, 2001	Psalm 130:7	“The Cookie Jar” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope • Redemption • Love • Mercy
January 28, 2001	Psalm 119:9	“Express Mail” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obedience • Study • Righteousness
February 4, 2001	John 3:16	“Love Train” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God’s Love • God Gave • God’s Gift • A Godly Choice
February 11, 2001	Ephesians 4:15	“Truth or Consequences” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak Truth • Be Loving • Grow Up • Obey Christ
February 18, 2001	Galatians 5:22	“Fruit Loops” Love/Joy Peace/Longsuffering Gentleness/Goodness Faith
February 25, 2001	I Peter 4:8	“A Blanket of Love” Grace Forgiveness Mercy Love

Note: The above outline is a sample of sermons presented in Children’s Church. All sermons were presented in KJV and NIV translations.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Personal Learning

My intent was to prove my hypothesis that the socialization process for our children had broken down. We discovered that a model of this sort would re-establish the kind of process necessary to equip and prepare our children for the twenty-first century. I have determined that the church can be the catalyst for producing great Americans and cutting-edge transformation. No longer can we fail to examine the way we rear our children and socialize them into society. The soul of America rests in the hands of urban, rural, and foreign children who love Jesus Christ and who commit to live holy and develop new concepts for making a difference.

Learning is essential for personal growth and development. The word for “disciple” in the Greek means “learner.” The experience of this project that was shared between pastor and children was wonderful. I now have a greater appreciation for ministry. I often wonder how persons can be engaged in worship and not have practical ministries to encourage growth and development.

Before beginning the doctoral program at United Theological Seminary, I had no idea how important it was for pastors to engage the academy for professional development. However, this experience clearly helped me to value the formal training of the pastor. This training helps develop the leader’s vision, insight, and character.

Canaan Missionary Baptist Church is the largest African American church in her area. She is 83 years old and somewhat traditional. However, with her acceptance of life skills classes, children's church, and a viable youth ministry; she has grown overnight into hopes of a bright future in God.

It also gives me great joy to see the lives of young people change, grow, and come to life. It's a sad occasion to see a group of young people bored out of their wits, sitting in the back of the church as if nothing and no one cares about them and their spiritual growth. But the ministries that are being developed at Faith Missionary are like a breath of fresh air in the life of the church.

Young people desire to lead healthy and productive lives, and the church should be the catalyst to send them into the mainstream of society equipped to handle life's challenges. Life presents great hope for the persons who attend the Faith Missionary Church today.

Often, we desire to create programs that are satisfying for the moment. The ministries being birthed at this church create a whole new body of people concerned more about family and individual growth and development. Church is more than just a sermon on Sunday. In fact, if one only attends church on Sunday, they usually have no idea of the joys of experiencing ministry during the entire week and the thrill of watching the interaction of ministry teams, facilitators, excited children, and most importantly, watching God at his best using ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

The socialization process is no longer broken at Canaan Missionary Church. Our children know how to use a checkbook. Our children understand the concept of credit and credit cards. Our children learned basic skills of investing and growing money. Our children are computer literate and adequately prepared, professionally and spiritually.

They know how to talk and persuade people to say yes. They have a basic knowledge of several foreign languages. They understand the purpose of dressing for success. They know what it means to be respectful and to be respected.

This ministry has had a breakthrough into the school system. Many children who will never enter the doors of a church will meet Canaan Missionary at Pierre Moran School. If they will not come to us, we will go to them. This is a clear indication that God is opening doors for his church in unique places and situations.

Personal Goals

- Provide opportunities for children who are not regular churchgoers.
- Build a socialization process for children to enter into mainstream society competent, confident, and courageous.
- Make discipleship ministry and evangelism the top priority of the Faith Missionary Church.

Conclusion

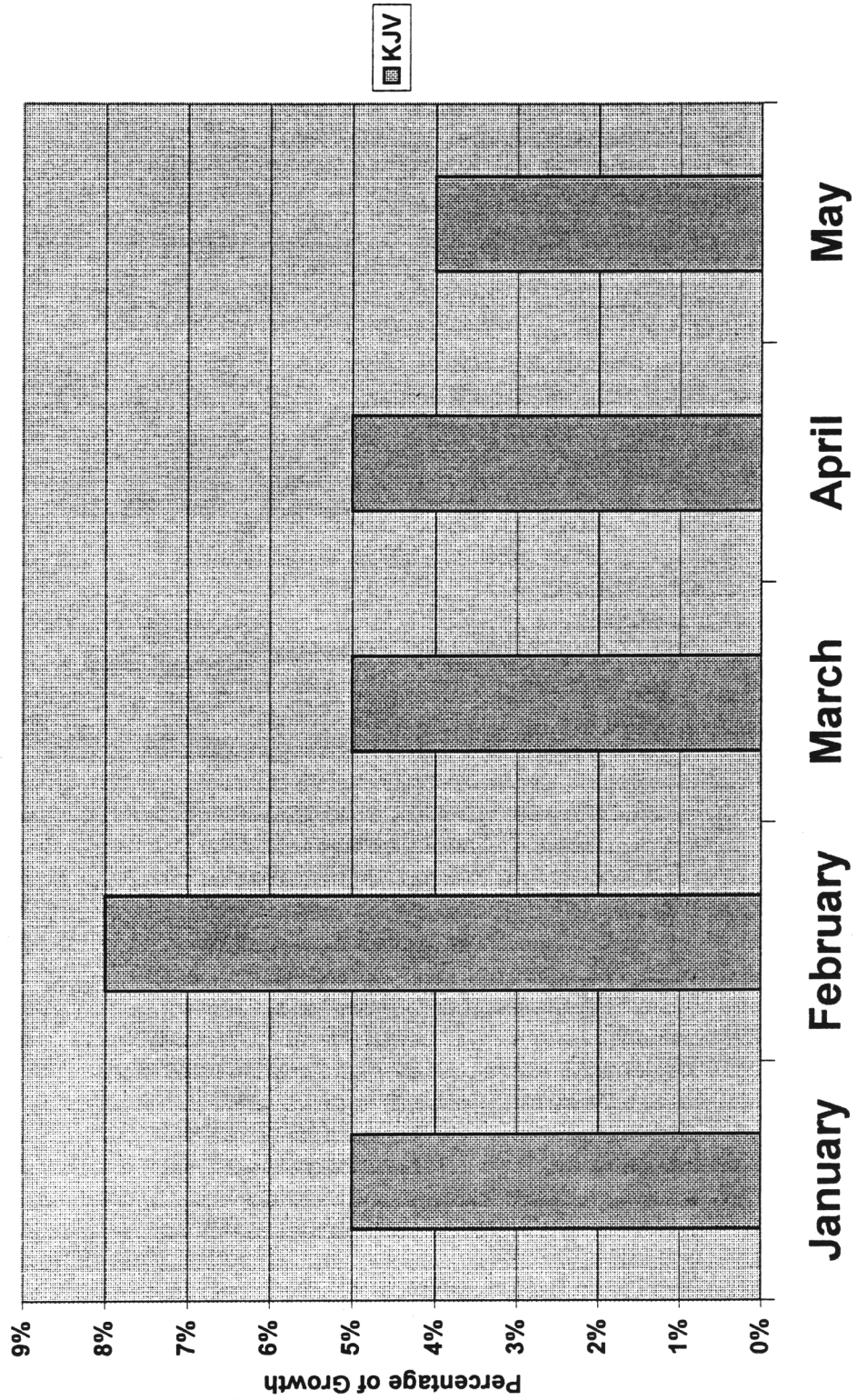
Today, we present the voice of God to people all over our city seeking the God of hope, comfort, and healing. Inherent in these ministries is a golden opportunity to build a better life for the persons who choose them. Time is fleeting and people must have options that create a better lifestyle and standard of living. Life is precious and we want all concerned to enjoy the blessings of God.

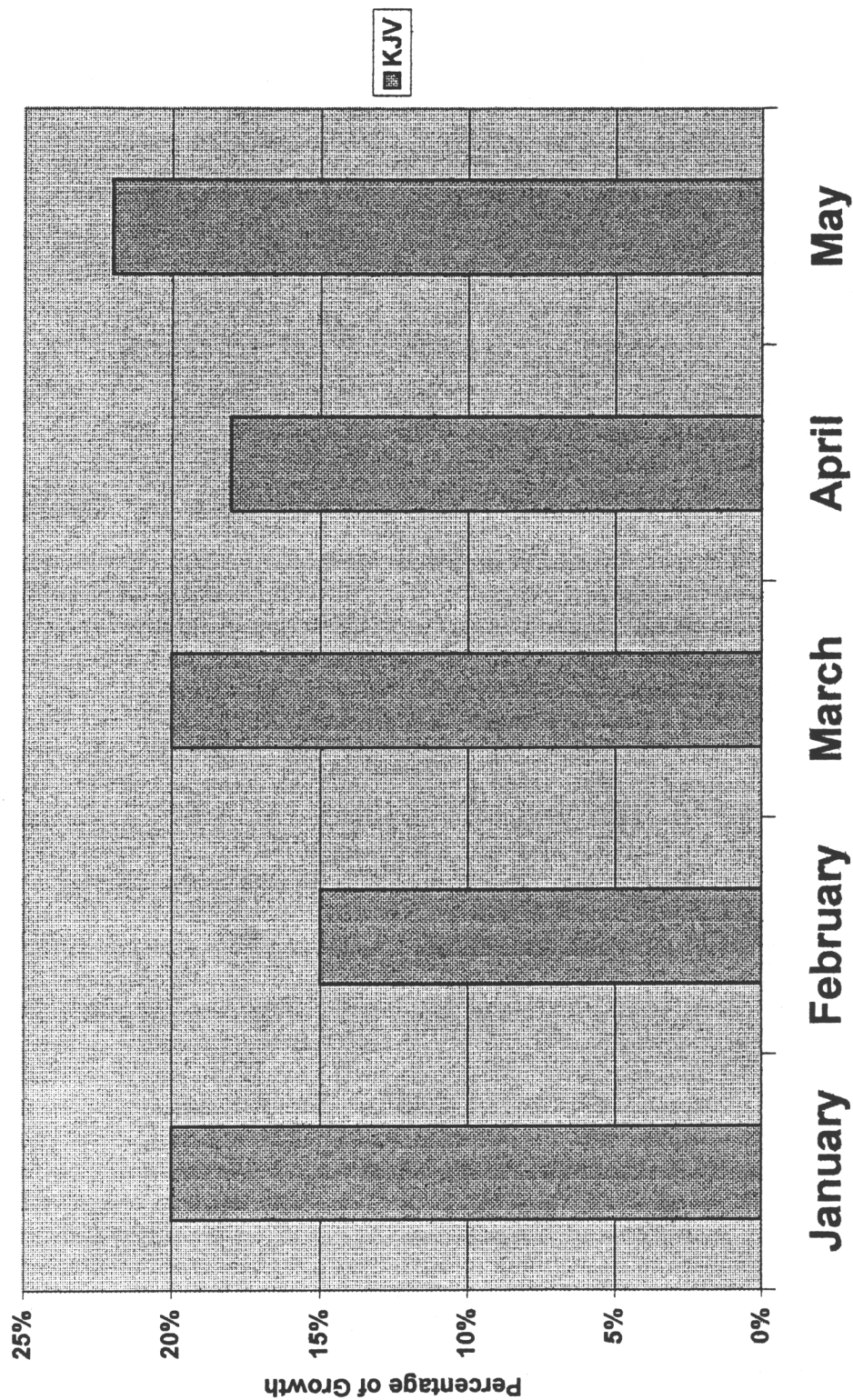
Too many people fall through the cracks because they don't have the spiritual fiber and practical skills to support or provide for themselves. Society, to some degree, is not taking responsibility for the people who desire but have no process. In these situations, the church must be the catalyst for human transformation so that God might be

pleased with her works. Compassion will cause people to love, forgive, and heal, but there must be an opportunity and a chance to help oneself. We trust this project will bless people everywhere on God's earth.

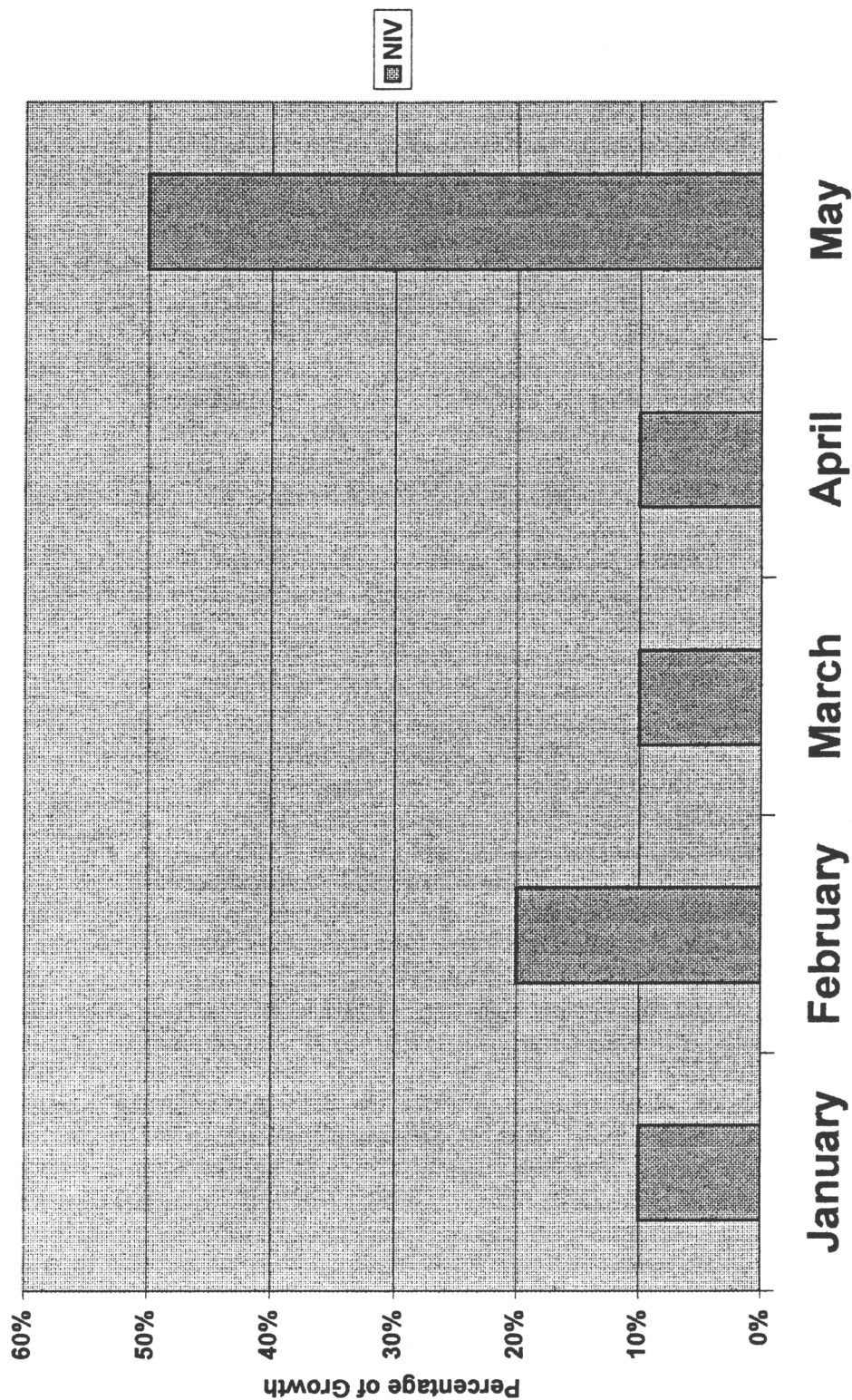
APPENDIX A
BIBLE VERSION COMPARISON CHARTS

A1 CHART 1 (4th - 6th Graders)

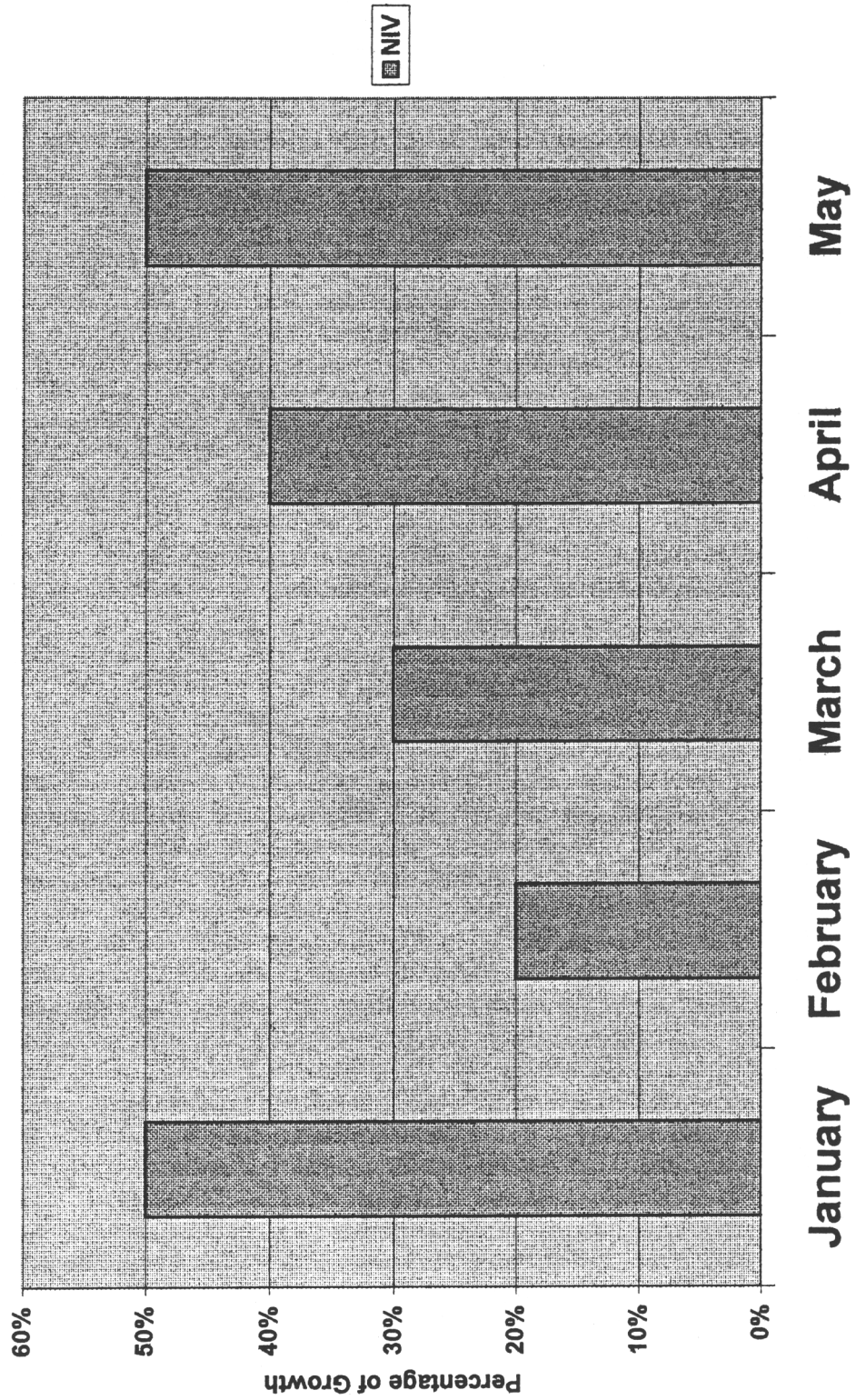


A2 CHART 2 (7th - 8th Graders)

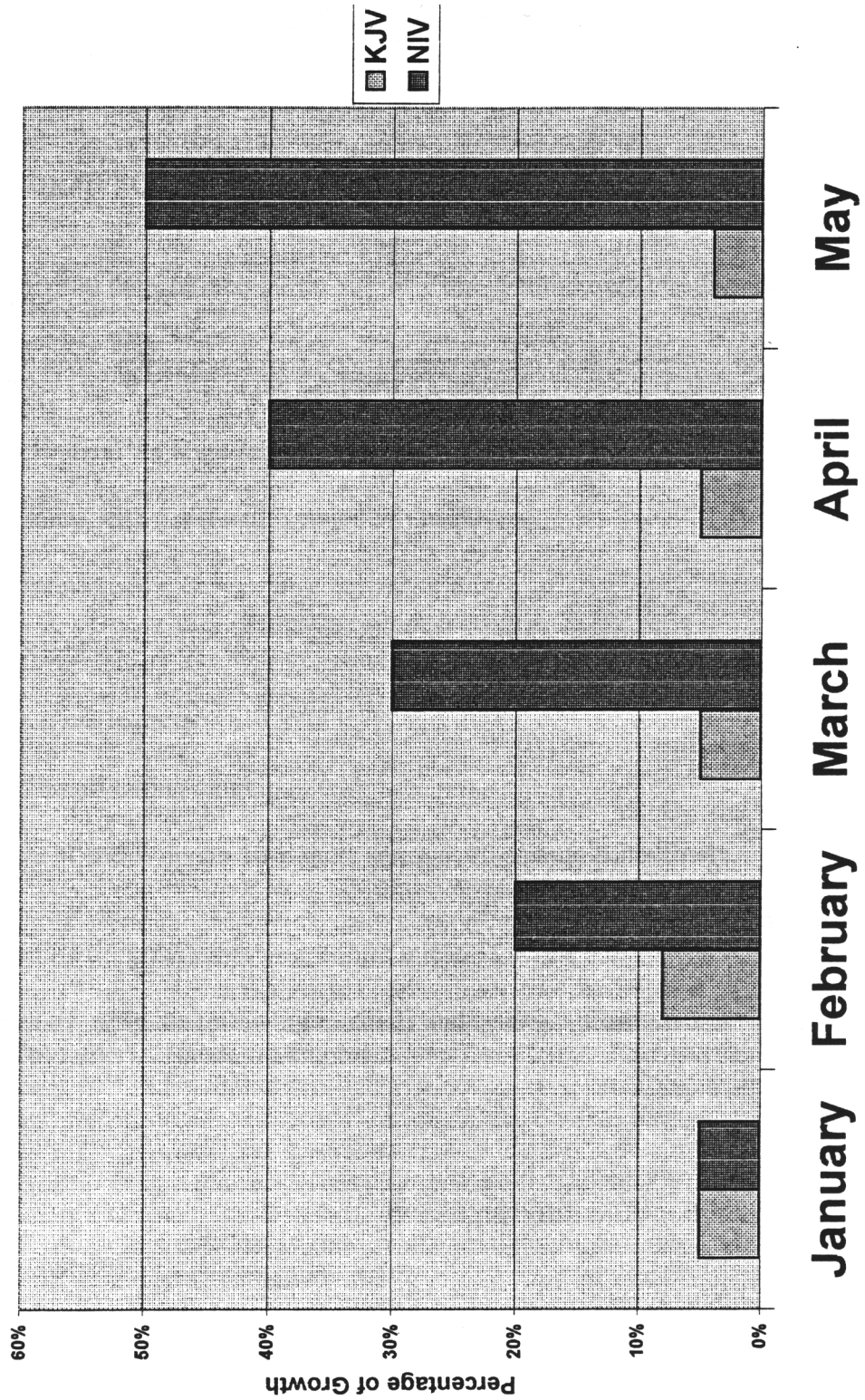
B1 CHART 1 (4th - 6th Graders)



B2 CHART 2 (7th - 8th Graders)



C1 CHART 1 (4th - 8th Graders)



APPENDIX B
IDEAS FOR QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS

CHILDREN'S CHURCH STAFF MEETING**January 4, 2001****6:00 p.m.**

The following was discussed in order to determine ways in which to collect Data (Research):

IDEAS FOR QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS

- Surveys – should the Children's Ministry be a one-day program or a five-day program?
- Should parents be involved in the Children's Church?
- Do you understand the King James Version of the Bible?
- Preach Sermons with a different version of the Bible.
- Object Sermons.
- Role Play Sermons.
- Observe children learning a different language.
- Computer classes during church.
- Sunday School and Worship 10-minute sermon, 20-minute Bible Study.
- Teaching basic economic principles, bank account, mock businesses, how to run a business, etiquette, power dressing, communication skills, etc.
- Collect data by using the following methods and/or tools: Case Studies, Observation, Surveys, Random Samples.

APPENDIX C
PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS FORMS

PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS

DATE:

Saturday Workshop

Sunday Children's Service

No. of Children present

No. of staff present

No. of Observers present

No. of Parents present

Subject:

I. Monitor and Document action research: Give a written description in paragraph form of the action observed:

II. Interpret Data: Explain what happened in the session:

III. Evaluate and Plan further action: Give suggestions on where we should go from here.

Observer:

PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE: March 3, 2002

Saturday Workshop X

Sunday Children's Service

No. of Children present 30

No. of staff present 2

No. of Observers present 3

No. of Parents present 2

Subject: Mentoring (Relationship Building)

I. Monitor and Document action research: Give a written description in paragraph form of the action observed:

The mentoring class started with building relationships between mentors and mentees. This process was achieved by using trust games. The game most memorable is that of one person stands in front of his mentor, closes his eyes and falls backward. Also the mentor would get in front of the mentee, close his eyes and the mentee would catch him. This game created a great foundation for trust between the two parties.

II. Interpret Data: Explain what happened in the session:

In relationship building, we worked with the notion of manhood, responsibility, accountability, discipline and focus. The observation of athletics, movies, film, motivational speakers, were all methods used in relationship building. One instance stands out the most and that is about always telling the truth. It pays to be honest.

III. Evaluate and Plan further action: Give suggestions on where we should go from here.

This process was started an intimacy between men that created a village type concern and community. The children started to see the role of leadership in new ways. They understood why it was essential to strive with excellence as a leader to keep themselves, people and the community functional, foundational and to present our finest to the society.

Observer: G. Peters and H. Peters

PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE: March 17, 2002

Saturday Workshop X

Sunday Children's Service

No. of Children present 30

No. of staff present 2

No. of Observers present 2

No. of Parents present 2

Subject: Spanish

I. Monitor and Document action research: Give a written description in paragraph form of the action observed:

This class surprisingly drew many children. Our children desire to be in communication with the Mexican children. They first learned the alphabets and food items, then nature items, home items, grocery store items, from this foundation they ultimately learned sentences.

II. Interpret Data: Explain what happened in the session:

While in the classroom, the teacher placed the names of food items in Spanish over a drawing of the actual food item. This was done along with household items and what they were. This process ultimately led to articulating words, sentences and songs in Spanish.

III. Evaluate and Plan further action: Give suggestions on where we should go from here.

The children learned songs extremely fast in Spanish, which appeared to be a great process for learning the alphabet and ultimately communicating in Spanish.

Observer: C. Barber

PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE: April 7, 2002

Saturday Workshop X

Sunday Children's Service

No. of Children present 25

No. of staff present 4

No. of Observers present 3

No. of Parents present 1

Subject: Etiquette

I. Monitor and Document action research: Give a written description in paragraph form of the action observed:

Early on the children thought that this process would be easy. Later they discovered how challenging it was to talk, walk, dress for success, following the rules and procedures of the church, company and school. This class was designed to polish the children in their first impression meetings with new persons in new relationships. This class literally worked on the areas the child was most weak in and worked the child ultimately through the entire process. One of the instructors graduated from Madam C.J. Walkers School of Etiquette and behavior.

II. Interpret Data: Explain what happened in the session:

The children learned what things should be in their wardrobe, i.e., dress or suit, dark blue, gray and black suits. Also included gray and black, red and gold ties and shined and polished shoes. White and eggshell shirts and blouses. They learned to look at persons directly in the eyes and give a firm handshake and a smile with a greeting. They learned to respect their peers and adults. To keep their clothes neat and clean. They learned cleanliness was godliness.

III. Evaluate and Plan further action: Give suggestions on where we should go from here.

Everyday they go through a format of greeting, handshakes, smiles, courtesy, and respect. They will learn the necessity for exercises, sitting in an upright position for back posture and the thing that helps us concentrate and focus in the classroom.

Observer: L. Curry

PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE: April 21, 2002

Saturday Workshop X

Sunday Children's Service

No. of Children present 20

No. of staff present 2

No. of Observers present 3

No. of Parents present 4

Subject: Financial Planning

I. Monitor and Document action research: Give a written description in paragraph form of the action observed:

This class has generated a great deal of encouraging and positive discussion regarding our children's usage of money and credit. Each child has his or her own personal account or store. We distributed play money and set up an account in order to teach children when and how to use money and credit. We taught them the necessity of accumulating wealth by selling products from their stores of a profit. They sold stocks, bonds, and services to help build wealth in their stores. Thereafter, they would invest that money to make it grow.

II. Interpret Data: Explain what happened in the session:

We noticed quickly that the children felt good about determining their destiny with their money. They learned naturally to spend very little and invest a lot. Money grows from investments, not on trees. Learning how to use credit by committing to pay it off in 30-day intervals. Only use credit when you have a plan to pay the credit off as quickly as possible. The children learned the importance of having a checking account and how to balance a checkbook. Learning how to put together a budget by placing all debts on one side and incoming money on the other.

III. Evaluate and Plan further action: Give suggestions on where we should go from here.

We concluded that every week if the children learned to handle a checkbook, credit card, and investments, we would set up a real account in their name. After one year with our program, we would allow them the privilege to work and plan that account with the support of church staff and financial planners.

Observer: T. Curry

PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE: May 5, 2002

Saturday Workshop X

Sunday Children's Service

No. of Children present 20

No. of staff present 4

No. of Observers present 3

No. of Parents present 2

Subject: Computer Basic Training

I. Monitor and Document action research: Give a written description in paragraph form of the action observed:

This is an exciting time for our church. Here in this classroom today there are 20 students assembled together at three computers excited about the privilege to learn and use the computer in church. The lesson on the system today is several different games. Using games on the computer teaches the child that computer usage is fun an never intended to intimidate the child.

II. Interpret Data: Explain what happened in the session:

Each child had a single opportunity to test the computer by playing checkers on the computer. The children appeared challenged but very interested in the games. The children had trouble waiting their turns but calmed down and watched, while they patiently waited their turn.

III. Evaluate and Plan further action: Give suggestions on where we should go from here.

There were several computers available but initially all children sat with one instructor to learn how to operate and use the computer properly. They were also taught how to start software usage, and to shut down the computer without destroying software material.

Observer: J. Bean

PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE: May 19, 2002

Saturday Workshop X

Sunday Children's Service

No. of Children present 30

No. of staff present 4

No. of Observers present 4

No. of Parents present 2

Subject: Welding

I. Monitor and Document action research: Give a written description in paragraph form of the action observed:

The initial stages of this class began with a video teaching how to learn how to be a welder. The video was 20 minutes of instruction on the instruments and safety. Thereafter role play becomes the entry of introduction of practicality of welding. Also, the process of ongoing education in this area was addressed to the class. This class had all boys in it. They were all calm and listened carefully.

II. Interpret Data: Explain what happened in the session:

The instructor brought in a helmet and torch to touch and demonstrated on scrap metal for the children. Excitement filled the room as the torch burned through the metal.

III. Evaluate and Plan further action: Give suggestions on where we should go from here.

This class lost about 10 people to a bit of boredom because of the time necessary in teaching on this skill. For some reason the children's patience was tested and somehow it appeared easy to lose focus.

Observer: R. Bean

PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE: June 2, 2002

Saturday Workshop X

Sunday Children's Service

No. of Children present 50

No. of staff present 4

No. of Observers present 3

No. of Parents present 4

Subject: Hair Braiding

I. Monitor and Document action research: Give a written description in paragraph form of the action observed:

I've never seen so many children so excited about professional development. There dummy heads and wigs all over the classroom. Boys and girls were disputing over who would be first to practice on the dummy head with the wig on it. All I could hear the children saying was, "If I learn how to braid, I can make some money." The wigs and children braided step-by-step with excitement. There were an equal amount of boys and girls braiding hair.

II. Interpret Data: Explain what happened in the session:

During the session all students sat around the instructor to learn how to braid in patterns without error. Also, they studied hard to master this concept. The boys were intense as the girls. Most of the boys braided hair just as effective as the girls.

III. Evaluate and Plan further action: Give suggestions on where we should go from here.

We've determined that hair braiding also can be used to bring about a coop community involving both gender's in business. Options became nontraditional with this particular service. We will build on this concept in other areas.

Observer: M. Lee

APPENDIX D
PARENT'S SURVEY AND RESULTS

FAMILY NAME _____

Survey for Parents with Children in Children's Ministry

1. How many children do you have that participate in West Hunter Street Baptist Church Children's Ministry?

2. How old is/are your child/children?

<i>Child 1</i>	<i>Child 2</i>	<i>Child 3</i>	<i>Child 4</i>
A 4-6	A 4-6	A 4-6	A 4-6
B 6-8	B 6-8	B 6-8	B 6-8
C 9-10	C 9-10	C 9-10	C 9-10
D 11-12	D 11-12	D 11-12	D 11-12

3. How often do you engage your child/dren in Bible readings?

- ☐ Frequently
☐ Occasionally
☐ Seldom
☐ Never

4. How do you engage your child in Bible readings? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Parents read to child
☐ Child reads to parent
☐ Sibling reads to child/parent
☐ Listen to audio taped readings
☐ Other, specify _____

5. What version of the Bible do you use to engage your child in Bible readings?

- ☐ King James
☐ NIV
☐ Children's Version
☐ Other, specify _____

6. Do you feel you child comprehends readings from this Bible version?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Do you use any Bible translations when using the King James version? If so, please list. _____

8. How often does your child attend Children's Church? Select those that apply.

- ☐ Each Sunday that it is held
☐ 2nd Sunday
☐ 3rd Sunday
☐ 4th Sunday

9. How often do feel that Children's Church should be held?

- ☐ Every Sunday
- ☐ As held presently
- ☐ Less frequently than held presently
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Other, specify _____

10. Would you allow your child to attend a Saturday workshop that would supplement your child's spiritual development and aid in his/her holistic development? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Would your child benefit from any of the following workshops if offered on Saturday's? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Foreign language
- ☐ Computer Literacy
- ☐ Financial Planning
- ☐ Etiquette
- ☐ Other, specify _____

12. Are there any other components of Children's Ministry you would like to see implemented? If so, please list.

Survey for Parents with Children in Children's Ministry									
AGES									
	Two-Three	Four-Six	Six-Eight	Nine-Ten	Eleven-Twelve	Total			
	2	5	7	3	4	21			
How often do you feel that Children's church should be held?					How do you engage your child in Bible readings?				
Each Sunday	As it is now	Less Frequently			Parents read to child		Child to Parents		
12	9	0	Total	Total	12	8			
Once a month	Other				Sibling to Child/Parent		Listen to Audio-tapes?		
1	1		Total	Total	1	3			
Would you allow your child to attend a Saturday workshop that would supplement your child's spiritual development and aid in his/hers holistic development?				Total	3				
					What version of the Bible to you use to engage these readings?				
Yes	No				King James	NIV	Children's Bible	Other	
14	0	Total	Total	8	2	8		1	
Would your child benefit from any of the following workshops if offered on Saturday's?					Do you feel your child comprehends from this Bible version?				
Foreign Language		Computer Literacy		Yes	No	Not Completely			
9	11		Total	Total	12	1	1		
Financial Planning		Etiquette		Other					
8	9		3	Total	How often do you engage your child/ran in Bible readings?				
How often does your child/ren attend Children's church?					Total	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
						7	6	1	0
Ea. Sunday	2nd Sunday	3rd Sunday	4th Sunday						
12	1	1	Total						
SUMMARY									
Based on the following data, (which are 14 surveys) the following observations can be made.									
The children's church ministry of the West Hunter Baptist Church ranges in age from two years old to twelve years old. Of the fourteen surveys, six of them answer the questions pertaining to two or more children. The observations show that a greater percent of the children do engage in reading with their families, of those that do the numbers show that the King James version is read equally as much as the Children's Bible. The NIV version is seldom used.									
Families do read frequently with their children and the majority of the parents feel that their child/ren is comprehending what is being read.									
Of the Parents who did the survey several felt that the Children's Church should be held each Sunday and as the schedule was. There was one who felt only once a month, and one was just returning. The Parents made a unanimous and consciencious decsion that they would allow their child/ren to attend a Saturday workshop in which they rated the topics in this order: Computer Literacy, Foreign Language, Etiquette, and Financial Planning as the topics of interest. Others were listed.									

APPENDIX E
CHILDREN’S SURVEY AND RESULTS



Name _____ Age _____ Date _____

1. How are you feeling today?



good



bad



okay

2. Did you enjoy the sermon this morning?



yes



no

3. Were there any words you did not understand?



Yes



no

4. Did you understand the message?



Yes



no

5. Share something you remember about the sermon.

APPENDIX F
RECRUITING POSTERS

*The West Hunter Street Baptist
Church*

Children's Ministry

*is moving in a new direction and
we need your expertise!!!*



**COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY *ETIQUETTES
*FOREIGN LANGUAGE (SPANISH)
FINANCIAL PLANNING



*If you are willing to teach 3 Saturday sessions in one of these
areas, we would love to have you join our team!*

Sign up today:

Name _____

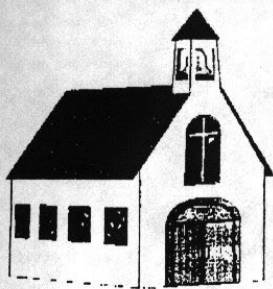
Phone No. _____ or _____

I volunteer for the following workshop _____

Thank you in advance for your support,

The Reverend Grady Wicker, Jr., Children's Ministry

The West Hunter Street Baptist Children's Church



is moving in a new direction ...
and we need your assistance.

**We need instructors to conduct three (3)
Saturday sessions in the following areas:**

- *Computer Technology *Financial Planning
- *Foreign Languages *Etiquettes

If you are willing to volunteer your time and talent for our Children's Ministry program, please fill in the form below and return it to the ushers.

Thank you for your support.

The Rev. Grady Wicker, Jr.
Children's Ministry

I volunteer to conduct three (3) sessions on _____

Name - _____

Address - _____

Phone Number - _____

Don't Forget

We need volunteers to assist us in evaluating the new innovations that Rev. Grady Wicker, Jr. is implementing into our Children's Ministry.

Evaluators will be expected to monitor the program and give written feedback. This information will be used to evaluate our program's strengths and weaknesses and its potential benefit to the Children of our church.

Please return this form to the ushers and you will be contacted by the committee.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

I can serve as an evaluator on Saturdays _____ Sundays _____

APPENDIX G
MESSAGE FOR MINISTERS

MESSAGE FOR MINISTERS

"It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view. The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that should be said.
 No prayer fully expresses our faith.
 No confession brings perfection.
 No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
 No program accomplishes the church's mission.
 No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are all about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water the seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future that is not our own. Amen".

This quote is from the late Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador. He was assassinated in 1980 for his words and actions for the rights of the poor.

APPENDIX H
WORD MATCH TESTS

Scripture Text: Luke 18:9-14
Scripture Title: Jesus tells the parable of two men who prayed (KJV)
The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (NIV)

Please match the words that have the same meaning.

KJV

Publican

Extortioners

Unjust

Tithes

Smote

Abased

NIV

Robbers

Evil Doers

Humbled

Beat

Tax Collector

Tenth

Scripture Text: Luke 10: 38-42
Scripture Title: Jesus Visits Mary and Mary (KJV)
At the Home of Martha and Mary (NIV)

Please match the words that have the same meaning.

KJV

Cumbered

Bid

Careful

Troubled

Good Part

NIV

Better

Upset

Distracted

Tell

Worried

APPENDIX I
KEY WORD TESTS

Galatians 5:16-26
Theme: “Living By the Holy Spirit’s Power”
King James Language
Key Words
(What Do They Mean?)

Lust
Fulfill
Adultery
Fornication
Uncleanness
Lasciviousness
Idolatry
Witchcraft
Hatred
Variance
Emulations
Wrath
Strife
Seditions
Heresies
Envy
Murders
Drunkenness
Revelings
Love
Joy
Peace
Longsuffering
Gentleness
Flesh
Desirous
Goodness
Faith
Meekness
Temperance

Galatians 5:16-26
NIV – Language
Theme: “Life by the Spirit”
Key Words
(What Do They Mean?)

Gratify
Desires
Sinful Nature
Sexual Immorality
Impurity
Debauchery
Idolatry
Witchcraft
Hatred
Discord
Jealousy
Fits of Rage
Selfish Ambition
Dissensions
Factions
Envy
Drunkenness
Orgies
Love
Joy
Peace
Patience
Kindness
Goodness
Faithfulness
Gentleness
Self Control
Conceited
Provoking

APPENDIX J
GEORGE ELIOT QUOTE

“We make a living from what we get.
We make a life from what we give.
What we have done for ourselves dies
with us. What we have done for others
and the world is immortal.”

George Eliot

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